



# THE OXFORD HISTORY OF THE IRISH BOOK

*Volume III | The Irish Book in English 1550–1800*

EDITED BY

Raymond Gillespie & Andrew Hadfield

# THE OXFORD HISTORY OF THE IRISH BOOK

GENERAL EDITORS

Robert Welch    Brian Walker

Volume I. The Gaelic Manuscript Tradition

Volume II. The Printed Book in Irish 1550–2000

Volume III. The Irish Book in English 1550–1800

Volume IV. The Irish Book in English 1800–1890

Volume V. The Irish Book in English 1890–2000

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OF THE IRISH BOOK

VOLUME III

The Irish Book  
in English  
1550–1800

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RAYMOND GILLESPIE  
AND  
ANDREW HADFIELD

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In memory of Vincent Kinane (1953–2000)  
and Mary ‘Paul’ Pollard (1922–2005), bibliographers

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## Preface

This is the first volume in what will eventually be a five-volume history of the Irish book. The five volumes will seek to chart, for the first time, one of the most venerable book cultures in Europe, from the earliest manuscript compilations to the flourishing book industries of the late twentieth century. So far there has been no comprehensive attempt at surveying the variety of Irish book history. There has been, of course, pioneering work in the field, and this undertaking would not have been possible without the dedicated labours of those scholars whose names and achievements will become evident from first perusal of the annotations. We do have, across various fields: accounts of authors and their publishing milieu; descriptions of the book trade; analyses of manuscripts and their production and dissemination; bibliographical and biographical data on printers and printing; discussions of Irish fonts; studies in the relation between the authority of the British crown and the control of the printing industry in Ireland; and many individual considerations of the publishing circumstances of individual authors. Until recently, however, there has been very little sustained attention given to the Irish book as an object situated in an environment of complex contingencies. This world of the book is concerned not only with individual endeavour and with changing intellectual and cultural formations in society, but also with power, money, trade, and communications.

In the past decade book history has begun to assume the character of an established scholarly practice, in Britain, Europe, the United States and further afield; and issues relating to the circumstances of book production and the cultures of reading have begun to receive sustained attention in specific areas. It is evident, therefore, that the contracting of this undertaking in relation to Ireland, by Oxford University Press in the late 1990s, was timely, responding to a new determination in scholarship in the arts and humanities for a comprehensive, integrated, and interdisciplinary approach to research. Interdisciplinary studies require of the individual researcher and scholar flexibility and the readiness to adapt, and, even more importantly, the force of intellect to integrate, manifold perceptions and considerations. Book history, therefore, challenges the individual scholar in demanding coherence across varieties of discourse and thought; it also, however, demands collaborative approaches from research teams.

The series was conceived, by ourselves, as comprising five separate teams, one for each volume, but with each team working in as full a cognizance as possible of the parameters and approaches to structure and content of the



others. The volumes were designed, initially, to have a kinship the one with the other, so that each would: sustain a narrative; focus on specific case studies; provide an overview in the introductory chapter (written by the volume editors); and conclude with a bibliographical essay which would describe and appraise the state of scholarship pertinent to that individual volume. As the project has matured there has been some slight modification in this set of arrangements drawn up to ensure an affinity between the separate volumes but the main lineaments of this design will be apparent in each of them.

Before the determinations were made that decided the format and general content of each volume there were consultations and meetings in Portaferry, Co. Down; Dublin; Belfast; and Oxford. One difficult issue was the disposition and coverage of Irish language and Latin material. A strongly-argued (and entirely defensible) position was against the separation of Irish-language and Latin books from books in English. However, our concern here was that Gaelic materials and perhaps Hiberno-Latin work could easily not be accorded their proper status without being treated separately, given that the antiquity of Irish book culture pertains to the Irish language and the Hiberno-Latin learning of the early ecclesiastical institutions. Furthermore, one of the notable features of Irish book history is the tenacity of Gaelic manuscript tradition which for centuries thrived alongside a print culture and where, not infrequently, transmission went from the printed page to manuscript and its patterns of dissemination. This, in our opinion, justified the separate treatment of the Irish language material.

There were discussions and collaborations across teams, but there was also much debate between the Editors of individual volumes and their teams. Editorial meetings were called for each of the volumes at which various issues relevant to the particular volume were resolved. Not infrequently these volume-based discussions arrived at decisions that were of general relevance: for example an editorial meeting in Dublin in early 2005 of Volume II raised, and resolved, for the entire five-volume series, the question of how the indexes for each volume would cite names in Irish and whether or not an English translation would be given. Names in Irish would be cited if that were the name by which the personage is most commonly known; there would be an English translation of the name; there would be an entry under the English surname cross-referring to the Gaelic form.

The project was disposed into five volumes as follows:

- Volume I    The Gaelic Manuscript Tradition
- Volume II   The Printed Book in Irish: 1550–2000
- Volume III   The Irish Book in English: 1550–1800
- Volume IV   The Irish Book in English: 1800–1890
- Volume V    The Irish Book in English: 1890–2000

It should be said, however, that these divisions of material are not mutually exclusive: as appropriate, discussion of Gaelic and Hiberno-Latin books and texts occurs as a matter of course in the consideration of English-language printed work. Further, Norman-French and relevant Old Norse materials surface where it is most apposite, contextually, that they do.

Irish book culture, as has been noted already, is one of great antiquity in the vernacular cultures of Europe. There is a veneration of the written word and of the book in Irish tradition, something not uncommon in societies where there is respect for and practice in oral learning and transmission of knowledge. And yet, for all kinds of reasons, not all of them clear, the printed book came late to Ireland, and when it arrived it did so as a manifestation of the reformation convictions of Queen Elizabeth I. Of course print belonged to the modern world, to cities, new trade, exchange, banks, and money. Modern capitalist endeavour (itself connected, most economic historians would agree, with the Protestant Reformation), was one of the driving forces behind the expansion of the influence of the printed book in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Capitalism and its modernizations (in banks, global trade, exploitation, surplus and its generation of the concept of leisure, as well as that of the private time which is essential for reading) did not arrive in Ireland until well into the seventeenth century and perhaps later. It brought the necessary energy to generate printing presses and indeed a printing industry and when it developed in Ireland it developed in style, an example being George Faulkner, Prince of Dublin Printers, and also the Dublin-based publisher of one of the greatest writers in English at the time, Jonathan Swift.

This undertaking, and the contracts issued by Oxford University Press which enabled it, has been timely. It proceeds alongside and enjoys good relations with cognate undertakings in Britain and Scotland: *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain* under the general Editorship of D. F. McKenzie, the leading book historian of his generation (with whom this project was intensively discussed at St John's College, Oxford, at a meeting hosted by the Senior Fellow, Dr. John Pitcher, himself an adviser to the project), David Mc Kitterick and Ian Willison (a ministering angel to this *History*); and the *History of the Book in Scotland* to be published by Edinburgh University Press and edited by Bill Bell and Jonquil Bevan.

It was a pleasure, as we undertook the groundwork for this project, to meet the leading book historians of the English- (and Irish-speaking) world; to find them so generous and encouraging; and to encounter the diametric opposite of intellectual vanity and the scholarly 'closed-shop'. We sought and found encouragement and approbation to counter our misgivings and uncertainty. We shall never forget the generosity of the Editors of the other book histories mentioned already but also certain others, themselves book historians of the first rank: Robin Alston, John Barnard, Toby Barnard, Pádraig Breatnach,

Patricia Donlon, Simon Elliot, Stephen Ennis, John Feather, Roy Foster, Warwick Gould, the late A.N. Jeffares, John Kelly, Alastair McCleery, Maureen Murphy, Tomás Ó Cathasaigh, Dónal Ó Luanaigh, Pádraig Ó Snodaigh, John Pitcher, Robert E. Ward, and Timothy Webb. It is appropriate to single out from this list two individuals who gave us the confidence to begin, and they are Robin Alston and Ian Willison.

The Vice-Chancellors of the University of Ulster and Queen's University, Belfast, at the time in the late 1990s when the project was being developed, Professor Gerry McKenna and Professor Sir George Bain, are to be thanked. Both supported the project with the creation of research fellowships and assistants at crucial stages. In particular, Professor McKenna, in creating the post of Editorial Assistant (whereby Dr. Andrew Keanie was appointed), enabled the work to proceed while Robert Welch assumed duties as Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Ulster for the period 2000 to date. This commitment was made because Professor McKenna, a true academic and an outstanding biomedical scientist, immediately saw the need for scientific approaches and methodology to be fostered in the arts, whereby individual effort can be fortified by strategic assistance of a practical kind.

Other essential support was forthcoming from: Professor John Gillespie; Dr John Gray, Librarian of the Linen Hall Library, Belfast; Professor John Hughes, Pro-Vice Chancellor in charge of research at the University of Ulster at the time (now President of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth); Professor Bernie Hannigan, who followed him in that role and who maintained the support; Professor Peter Jupp; Professor Séamus Mac Mathúna; and Professor Vincent Comerford.

This History, while it is dwarfed by a massive undertaking like the new *Dictionary of National Biography*, is nevertheless a unique combination of collaborative will, interdisciplinary approaches, and networks of institutional support. Funding was provided by the British Academy Joint Institutional Fellowship Scheme, which drew the two Universities in Northern Ireland together in the management and conduct of this research. The two Universities matched the funding provided by the British Academy and, as has been indicated, contributed further resources. The Academy scheme was taken over by the Arts and Humanities Research Board (now the Arts and Humanities Research Council) and it also funded a research fellowship at the Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Studies, at the University of London, whereby work on Volume V was greatly enhanced. Oxford University Press, in contracting the work, ensured its worldwide dissemination, and provided valuable (and necessary) deadlines for delivery. The editorial team for the five volumes and the advisors to each of these came from across the world. Foras na Gaeilge supported Volumes I and II; and the Institute of Ulster Scots Studies, under its Director Professor John Wilson,

grant aided Volume I. Crucial support was forthcoming from the University of Ulster's Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages under its Director, Professor Máiréad Nic Craith; and Cultural Development, at the University of Ulster; under its Head, Kate Bond, provided assistance. We thank the editors at Oxford University Press, especially Sophie Goldsworthy, Frances Whistler, Andrew McNeillie, and the late Kim Scott Walwyn.

The idea of bringing to fruition a History of the Irish Book, to coexist with other book histories that were underway in this emerging discipline, was first brought to our attention by the late Dr Christopher Corr, a doctoral research student of Robert Welch. Staff from libraries across the world have contributed to this research, but we would especially like to thank the librarians at the Queen's University, Belfast, and the University of Ulster. The compilation of the index was guided by the Oxford house rules with inputs from the Volume Editors and the General Editors. These inputs relate to thematic, historical, and legislative issues pertinent to book history.

A word of definition in closing: this is a *History of the Irish Book*, not just a history of the book in Ireland. The 'Irish Book' includes books by Irish men and women throughout the world, as well as books read in Ireland. It was decided to exclude any sustained attempt to provide accounts of the history of newspapers, although reference is made to newsprint where there is relevance to book history. Individual prefaces to each of the volumes will form a chronology of progress and development. These prefaces will retain a generic character and will also address specific issues arising from each of the volumes.

**Brian Walker**  
**Queen's University**  
**Belfast**

**Robert Welch**  
**University of Ulster**

## Acknowledgements

Collaborative projects, such as the *Oxford History of the Irish Book*, have the potential to generate frustration as well as satisfaction. In our case the latter has far outweighed the former. This had been due mainly to the efforts and enthusiasms of a wide range of people. First, and most importantly, the contributors to this volume have been models of their trade. They have written essays of a high standard promptly and have borne uncomplainingly the demands of the editors for excisions, revisions, and illustrations. In some cases difficult personal circumstances made the task of completing essays a particularly onerous one and we are especially grateful to those who responded with such good grace to our demands in the face of those trials.

Those who have written for this volume have drawn on a wide range of scholarly resources. The notes to each essay reflect the range of institutions that have supported the work of the contributors. In particular the British Library; National Library of Ireland; National Library of Wales; Trinity College, Dublin; Bodleian Library, Oxford; Rare Books Room of Columbia University; Gilbert Library, Dublin Public Libraries; and the Russell Library, NUI Maynooth have put their resources at our disposal. Those individuals who have supported this project in a variety of ways are too legion to mention but we might single out our families, both immediate and scholarly, who have tolerated our preoccupation with book history.

We have also been conscious that this volume is part of a wider project and as a result it has benefited from the support of a wide scholarly community. The general editors have been supportive without being intrusive and the practical support in day-to-day matters of the project research officer, Andrew Keanie, has made the compilation of this volume much easier than it might have been. It has also been a pleasure to work once again with the editorial and production teams at Oxford University Press.

We are grateful to the following for permission to reproduce illustrations: Churchill House Press (1, 2), Governors and Guardians of Marsh's Library (5), Bodleian Library, Oxford (6, 7), and Dublin Public Libraries (8, 12).

Although the history of the book as it is practiced in this volume is a relatively new subject it builds on a long tradition of bibliographical work stretching back into the nineteenth century. Without the basic bibliographical research of scholars such as Ernan McClintock Dix, and, more recently, Tony Sweeney and others, this volume would not have been possible. In particular the notes to the essays demonstrate the importance of the pioneering work of Mary Pollard in the field of Irish bibliography. This volume is dedicated to

her memory as a tribute to her unique contribution to Irish bibliography and the history of the Irish book. It is also dedicated to the memory of Vincent Kinane. Vincent was to have written for this volume but sadly died in 2000 before he could complete his essay. The volume is poorer as a result.

We would like to thank the advisers to Volume III: Robin Alston, British Library; John Barnard, University of Leeds (Emeritus); Toby Barnard, Hertford College, Oxford; (†) A. N. Jeffares, University of Stirling (Emeritus); Máire Kennedy, Gilbert Library, Dublin; Robert E. Ward, Western Kentucky University; and the Editorial Assistant, Andrew Keanie, University of Ulster.

**Raymond Gillespie**  
**Andrew Hadfield**

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## List of Abbreviations

BL	British Library
<i>Cal. Carew</i>	<i>Calendar of the Carew Papers in Lambeth Library</i> (6 vols., London: HMSO, 1867–73)
<i>Cal. S.P. Ire.</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Relating to Ireland</i> (24 vols., London: HMSO, 1860–1911)
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> (63 vols., London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1885–1900)
<i>ESTC</i>	<i>English Short Title Catalogue, 1473–1800 on CD-ROM</i> , 3rd edn. (London: Thomson Gale, 2003)
<i>IESH</i>	<i>Irish Economic and Social History</i>
<i>JRSAI</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i>
NA	National Archives, Dublin
NLI	National Library of Ireland, Dublin
NLW	National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth
NUI	National University of Ireland
<i>PRIA</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</i>
PRO	National Archives: Public Record Office, London
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin

## Notes on References

In this volume dates before 1752 are given Old Style but the year is assumed to begin on 1 January.

References to early modern printed works have been given in modernized form. Full details of printers and booksellers are set out in *English Short Title Catalogue, 1473–1800 on CD-ROM*, 3rd edn. (London: Thomson Gale, 2003). ESTC reference numbers have been included in citations to facilitate access.

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# I

## Introduction

### The English Language Book in Ireland, c.1550–1800

*Raymond Gillespie and Andrew Hadfield*

#### Scholarship and Print

Since its invention, print has fascinated those interested in the Irish past. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries scholars such as Richard Stanihurst, James Ware, and James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, all collected vast numbers of books, which they scoured for scraps of information. These were then pieced together to create narratives of Ireland's histories that made their way through the printing press into the hands of readers. They were not alone in the world of print. Collectors on a grand scale such as Archbishop Narcissus Marsh of Dublin and his successor, Archbishop William King, assembled libraries, the contents of which spanned mathematics, science, philosophy, theology, music, and geography, among other areas of scholarly endeavour. Such men were often deeply attached to their collections. When the Jacobite *revanche* of the late 1680s forced Archbishop Marsh out of his episcopal residence, he had to leave his treasured books behind. He fretted because he had been deprived of books and hoped that 'I shall shortly be restored to them and they to me'. When this happened in 1693 he retreated into his world of books where he spent much time 'in my studies'.<sup>1</sup> Into the eighteenth century scholars and gentlemen continued to assemble libraries, often using books as much for items of display as the information they contained. Fine bindings, bookcases, and shelves all became part of the smart furnishings of the Irish country house.

With the emergence of modern scholarly disciplines in the nineteenth century the roles of the book as physical object and as purveyor of information

<sup>1</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Smith MS 52, f. 73; Smith MS 45, f. 23a.



and ideas were prised apart. Bibliographers examined the book as a material object, preparing lists of the output of the press they were interested in, recording the typefaces and printers' ornaments used, and describing the decorative bindings and the tools that had made them. Scholars in Ireland were not slow to exploit and explore the opportunities this new area of study provided. Perhaps the most significant figure to emerge was Ernan McClintock Dix. Dix, a Dublin solicitor, was both book collector and scholar and had assembled a large collection of early Irish printings before his death in 1936. In a series of almost 150 papers, he laid the foundations for the study of the history of printing in Ireland, charted the spread of provincial printing and the emergence of the various types of works produced on the Irish presses from the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Dix was the most distinguished member of a generation of Irishmen dedicated to the emerging science of bibliography.<sup>3</sup> The pages of the *Irish Book Lover*, founded in 1909, carried many communications from bibliographers throughout Ireland who described and analysed unrecorded imprints, rare books, and fine bindings that had come to their notice. This tradition of scholarship is one that has continued to the present day. The work of Mary Pollard on the history of Irish printing, culminating in her magisterial dictionary of members of the Dublin book trade, has been of central importance in advancing our understanding of this vitally important sphere of activity.<sup>4</sup> Other aspects of bibliographical description and the history of print have received equally careful scholarly attention. Tony Sweeney's *Ireland and the Printed Word* (1999) has continued in Dix's tradition of cataloguing the output of the Irish presses; Dermot McGuinne's *Irish Type Design* (1992) has reworked Edward Lynam's classic investigation into the uses of Irish type; and Vincent Kinane's *History of the Dublin University Press* (1994) has revealed the commercial dealings of Dublin printers and their customers in the nineteenth century.<sup>5</sup> Even so, these impressive endeavours have by no means exhausted what the book as physical object can reveal about its history and much more work needs to be done in this area.

<sup>2</sup> For a bibliography of Dix's work see E. R. McC. Dix, *Printing in Dublin Prior to 1601*, 2nd edn. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1971), 34–40b.

<sup>3</sup> For a survey of this group see Charles Benson and Mary Pollard, 'The Silken Purse: Bibliography in Ireland', in Peter Davison (ed.), *The Book Encompassed: Studies in Twentieth Century Bibliography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 200–5.

<sup>4</sup> In particular Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989) and eadem, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> Tony Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word* (Dublin: Éamonn de Búrca, 1997); E.W. Lynam, *The Irish Character in Print, 1571–1923* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969); Dermot McGuinne, *Irish Type Design. A History of Printing Types in the Irish Character* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992); Vincent Kinane, *A History of the Dublin University Press, 1734–1976* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1994).

At the same time as collectors and bibliographers described the book, those interested in the history of Ireland turned increasingly to the book as evidence from which the past could be reconstructed. Some groups such as the Irish Archaeological Society, the Celtic Society, the Ossianic Society and, the most influential of all, the Irish Texts Society used the medium of print to make manuscripts much more readily available than they had been previously. Individuals, such as Sir John Thomas Gilbert, not only assembled large personal libraries, but also added to the stock of books available in Ireland by producing editions of the ancient records of Dublin and important manuscript histories of Ireland in the 1640s. So significant was Gilbert's personal collection that it was purchased by Dublin Corporation on his death and now forms the core of the Dublin Public Libraries Research Collection.<sup>6</sup>

As well as producing editions of texts that would help provide the basis of a national history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, historians also used the history of print in their attempts to explain the past. The failure of the Reformation in Ireland, for instance, seems to be due, in some measure, to the Dublin government's unwillingness to make available the ideas of the Reformed religion in printed form. In contrast to Wales, where the Bible—at least the New Testament—was readily available in the printed vernacular by 1567, the Irish New Testament was not available until 1603, and the Old Testament had to wait until 1685. This state of affairs suggested to some an explanation as to why the Protestant Reformation succeeded in Wales, but failed in Ireland.<sup>7</sup> Historians are less convinced today than they once were by such straightforward explanations as to how print conveys—or fails to convey—ideas in past societies. As in Ireland, the vernacular printed Bible appeared very late in Scotland, as was also the case with other godly writing. None of this, however, hindered the spread of Reformed ideas there.<sup>8</sup> A more sophisticated view of the dynamics of print in forcing and shaping social and intellectual change is required. Although print has been incorporated into explanations of religious change, it has been relatively neglected in the world of ideas and practical politics. A case in point is the political radicalism that emerged in Ireland in the latter years of the eighteenth century and which exploded into revolution in 1798. Historians have been aware that these ideas originated in America and France in the 1770s and 1780s, becoming common

<sup>6</sup> Douglas Hyde and D. J. O'Donoghue, *Catalogue of the Books and Manuscripts Comprising the Library of Sir John T. Gilbert* (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1918).

<sup>7</sup> See Brendan Bradshaw, 'The English Reformation and Identity Formation in Ireland and Wales', in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533–1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 43–111; Alan Ford, *The Protestant Reformation in Ireland, 1590–1641*, 2nd edn. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Karl Bottigheimer and Ute Lotz-Heumann, 'The Irish Reformation in European Perspective', *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 89 (1998), 278, 284.

political currency in Ireland by the early 1790s. Yet until recently no one asked how they made this journey. Only in the past few years have studies of French books and the printing of revolutionary tracts such as Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* shown how such ideas navigated their way around late eighteenth-century Ireland.<sup>9</sup>

## Changing Histories of the Book

This divorce between the book as physical object and purveyor of ideas has considerably weakened the potential of the study of the book history as a key to understanding the past.<sup>10</sup> Recent scholarly endeavours have been directed towards creating a more cohesive and coherent understanding of the role of the book in society. The very familiarity of print as an explanatory tool for major events such as the Reformation or the Enlightenment has paradoxically made it difficult to gain a full awareness of the complex function of print in past societies. Perhaps the earliest paradigmatic shift that allowed a process to begin whereby the book was given its full and complex cultural value was Elizabeth Eisenstein's reassessment of 'the printing revolution'. Pointing to the significance of print as a means of fixing, preserving, and circulating ideas, she has drawn together the two aspects of book history that had previously been separate.<sup>11</sup> From a bibliographer's perspective, Donald McKenzie has shown how variations in typography, layout, and format all convey messages to readers that give particular meanings to texts.<sup>12</sup> From another perspective Robert Darnton has situated the production and distribution of books within social relationships—the 'communications circuit'—that has emphasized the relationship between author, printer, and reader, as books carried ideas around society.<sup>13</sup> Examining the evidence from yet another position

<sup>9</sup> Graham Gargett and Geraldine Sheridan (eds.), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment, 1700–1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999); Máire Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001); David Dickson, 'Paine and Ireland', in David Dickson, Dáire Keogh, and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *The United Irishmen: Republicanism, Radicalism and Rebellion* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993), 135–50.

<sup>10</sup> An exemplary study of this problem is Kirstie M. McClure, 'Cato's Retreat: *Fabula, Historia* and the Question of Constitutionalism in Mr. Locke's Anonymous *Essay on Government*', in Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (eds.), *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 317–50.

<sup>11</sup> Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Eisenstein's ideas have been challenged: see Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> Donald McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Robert Darnton, 'What is the History of Books?', in Robert Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (London: Faber, 1990), 107–35.

some have seen the interaction of reader and text as a way of creating multiple and divergent understandings of the books that people encountered as they rolled off the presses in ever-increasing quantities in early modern Europe. Carlo Ginzburg's excavations of the mental world of Menocchio the miller, who appeared before the Inquisition in late sixteenth-century Italy, was based on a reconstruction of the books he read and how he read them.<sup>14</sup> This has proved a fruitful line of inquiry that others have followed. Roger Chartier's explorations of the interactions of early modern French readers with non-canonical texts, specifically with cheap print such as the *bibliothèque bleu*, and the importance of public reading, have widened our understanding of the penetration of books into non-literate worlds.<sup>15</sup>

Taken together this disparate body of work has provided an important set of analytical tools that can be used to understand the evolution of past societies. These studies have demonstrated that print was not a neutral medium, but that it provided prompts for readers to understand their worlds in many different and complex ways.<sup>16</sup> Intellectuals such as Gabriel Harvey read in particular ways for particular reasons, often at the behest of a patron. Men like Harvey entered into a dialogue with the books they read, scribbling notes in the margins detailing what they thought appropriate for their particular circumstances.<sup>17</sup> Such behaviour was not confined to intellectuals. Kevin Sharpe's study of the reading practices of a seventeenth-century English country gentleman, William Drake, based on the extensive collection of note-books and annotations that he made, reveals the sophisticated nature of Drake's reading and how that activity merged with other aspects of his life.<sup>18</sup> These individual studies alert us to the question of how representative one set of notes or marginal annotations can be of reading practices in society at large. Of course, any surviving evidence is of great value in helping us reconstruct the intellectual habits of past readers, especially careful and copious notes; however, often the exceptional rather than the typical survives—as is undoubtedly the case with Samuel Pepys' diary—and we must be cautious of assuming that a whole society read in the same manner.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, trans. John and Anne Tedeschi (London: Routledge, 1980).

<sup>15</sup> Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), esp. 183–239; idem (ed.), *The Experience of Reading* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989).

<sup>16</sup> The pioneering study in this area is Marshall McLuhan's *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (London: Routledge, 1962) and more recently Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (eds.), *A History of Reading in the West* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> Lisa Jardine and Anthony Grafton, '“Studied for Action”: How Gabriel Harvey read his Livy', *Past and Present* 129 (1990), 30–78.

<sup>18</sup> Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

<sup>19</sup> See the discussion in Cyndia Susan Clegg, 'History of the Book: An Undisciplined Discipline?', *Renaissance Quarterly* 54 (2001), 221–45, 233–8.

## Cultures of Print

The contributors to this volume of the *Oxford History of the Irish Book* engage with these new ways of understanding the book as both an object and a repository of ideas. To that end the volume represents the beginning of an exploration of the culture of the book in early modern Ireland. Section 1, 'Print Culture', draws on Elizabeth Eisenstein's formulation of the three specific attributes of print: that texts could be standardized, circulated widely, and preserved without change. Thus the two essays in this section (chapters 2 and 3) examine the sort of print that existed in Irish society, how it circulated, how it was kept and collected, and how it was used by government and churches to spread their centrally determined and standardized messages. In these ways print affected the lives and thoughts of virtually everybody who lived in early modern Ireland, whether they were literate or not. Hearing the message of print, whether a proclamation read aloud, or the words of the Bible in church, created an awareness of print among those who heard as well as those who could actually read. For this reason books, and the world associated with them, were often as important for their symbolic value as for their actual contents. Protestants swore oaths on the Bible using the book as a symbolic representation of the sacred; Catholics used missals in the same way.<sup>20</sup> Thus the desecration of Bibles by Catholic insurgents in the 1640s was not just about the destruction of a physical item. The destruction was a ritual act, conceived to make specific points. In Armagh some rebels placed 'the sacred Bible on their privy parts in contempt of the same' and another 'opening the sacred Bible pissed on the same saying if I could do worse with it I would'. This Rabelaisian juxtaposition of the pure word of God and the impure genitalia was a powerful symbolic gesture. Likewise public book burnings and mutilation by the state were not concerned with engaging with the arguments and ideas in those works; rather there was a determination to obliterate heterodox views.<sup>21</sup>

## Workings of Print

These cultures of print did not arrive fully formed at the beginning of the sixteenth century. In European terms print came to Ireland relatively late.<sup>22</sup> Ireland was drawn only slowly into the world of print and those who lived in

<sup>20</sup> Raymond Gillespie, *Devoted People: Belief and Religion in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 33–4.

<sup>21</sup> TCD, MS 836, ff. 63v, 64. See also Cyndia Susan Clegg, *Press Censorship in Jacobean England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), ch. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450–1800*, trans. David Gerard (London: Verso, 1990).

that world needed time to develop the techniques for producing and managing the printed works that they encountered. For the first century of printing in Ireland control over the only press in Dublin was exercised through the King's Printer.<sup>23</sup> Early provincial printing took time to spread, beginning with the presses established for political reasons at Waterford, Kilkenny, and Cork by the Irish Confederates in the 1640s.<sup>24</sup> In the years after 1660 the power of the King's Printer started to wane and by 1690 was effectively over. As a result provincial printing, beginning in Belfast in the 1690s, now grew significantly. By 1800 some thirty-seven Irish towns had provincial presses.<sup>25</sup> Before 1700 Ireland was a new importer of books; after that date it became a major exporter, exploiting loopholes in copyright legislation to reprint a wide range of works—especially novels—for both the English and colonial markets.<sup>26</sup>

The implication of this state of affairs was that Irish literary taste, religious language, and political vocabulary were all shaped by works printed in England. In the case of religion, the *Book of Common Prayer* was a common text, usually printed in England and imported into Ireland, which shaped the religious language and experience of Irish Protestants.<sup>27</sup> Although English language works may have dominated the world of print in early modern Ireland, domination was not complete. Catholicism drew on works printed in continental Europe and smuggled into Ireland whereas more legal routes were taken by European works of science and philosophy, which made their way into libraries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see chapters 20 and 21).

In the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Dublin presses increased their output and improved the techniques by which their works were distributed throughout the country. The print trade became an increasingly well-organized body, particularly after the establishment of the Guild of St Luke, the printers' and stationers' guild, in 1672. The Guild played a major role from the 1690s in regulating the Irish book trade (see chapters 4 and 5). What might be described as an ancillary trade to the printer, the bookbinder likewise became better organized and produced ever more elaborate work that permitted the display of books as prestige and luxury items.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Mary Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent, 1600–1800', *Irish Booklore* 4 (1978), 79–95.

<sup>24</sup> W. K. Sessions, *The First Printers in Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny pre-1700* (York: Sessions, 1990).

<sup>25</sup> Seamus O'Casaide, *Typographical Gazetteer of Ireland: Or the Beginnings of Printing in Irish Towns* (Dublin, 1923).

<sup>26</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800*.

<sup>27</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Lay Worship and Spirituality, 1550–1750: Holy Books and Godly Readers', in Raymond Gillespie and W. G. Neeley (eds.), *The Laity and the Church of Ireland, 1000–2000* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 137–51.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph McDonnell, *Five Hundred Years of the Art of the Book in Ireland: 1500 to the Present* (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 1997).

Contemporaries dealt with this deluge of print from the holds of ships and the Dublin presses in a variety of ways that corresponded to the multifunctional nature of the book. For some the book was an artefact to be treasured and displayed with its elaborate binding and marbled edges. In other circumstances books were part of wider collections of strange and curious items displayed to excite and titillate the imagination. When John Dunton visited the library of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1698, he found the books displayed with a male skeleton and 'manuscripts, medals and curiosities'.<sup>29</sup> As attractions for collectors books had a powerful appeal (see chapters 6 and 7). For some, libraries were functional collections used by scholars, as at Trinity, but as books became more common in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries libraries grew in size, and their locations increasingly became centres of public sociability. In the seventeenth century the owners of large libraries, such as James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, lent books to his friends and borrowed from other private individuals. In the eighteenth century such exchanges of books moved from the private to the public sphere. Clergy, for example, eager to improve the moral well-being of their flock, established parochial libraries. Libraries were also attached to charity schools, such as the Bluecoat School in Cork, which had multiple copies of improving works designed for public lending.<sup>30</sup> Public libraries on a grander scale were created by some bishops concerned to encourage learning within their dioceses. The first of these was founded by Archbishop Marsh in Dublin in 1701 and the craze for diocesan libraries quickly spread through eighteenth-century Ireland.<sup>31</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century the radical potential for local reading was being exploited through local reading societies, often dominated by groups such as the United Irishmen (see chapter 13).<sup>32</sup>

The collecting, display, and circulation of books led, naturally, to readers wishing to extract meaning from them relevant to their everyday experience. The reconstruction of this process of reading (see chapters 8 and 9) is a complex and problematic task. There were so many different styles and techniques of reading in the early modern period that it is difficult to extrapolate general patterns from the surviving evidence. However, there do seem to have been generally agreed ways of reading that underlay approaches to particular types of text. For example, one read godly books with more care than one might read a news sheet. The Bible was seen by many to be the word of God communicated directly to man and hence was of prime importance in moulding the experience of everyday life. However, it was also an ambiguous and sometimes contradictory text and as a result could not be left unmediated.

<sup>29</sup> John Dunton, *Teague Land or a Merry Ramble to the Wild Irish*, ed. Andrew Carpenter (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 130.

<sup>30</sup> Henry Maul, *Pietas Corcagiensis* (Cork, 1721), 37–47.

<sup>31</sup> Maura Tallon, *Church of Ireland Diocesan Libraries* (Dublin: APCK, 1959).

<sup>32</sup> J. R. R. Adams, 'Reading Societies in Ulster', *Ulster Folklife* 26 (1980), 55–64.

Various religious communities devised different reading styles to ensure that the word of God was read in appropriate ways and religious orthodoxy maintained.<sup>33</sup> Although the Bible was a unique book and required particular reading skills, the techniques of reading evidenced in regard to the Bible were representative of wider reading practices. It was necessary to ensure, insofar as this was possible, that interpretation could be made to conform to certain dominant views. Even works of science or law required some measure of agreement on how they were to be read within interpretative communities. Handbooks such as Richard Bolton's *A Justice of the Peace for Ireland*, which first appeared in 1638, provided guidance as to how statutes, proclamations, and other legal documents were to be read and understood within the context of the common law.

## The Impact of Print

Arguably the most difficult area to analyse in the emerging histories of the book is the impact of print on wider society. Measuring literacy is a notoriously problematic enterprise. It is clear that there is a wide spectrum of literacies. The ability to sign one's name, for example, ranged from the practised, fluent signature writer to one who had simply learned to copy the letters forming his or her name.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, evidence of the ability to read often leaves little trace. Reading as a skill was usually taught before writing in the early modern world and therefore many more people could read than could exercise the more advanced skill of writing. In Ireland this situation is especially complicated because of the variability of language itself. Given that most books were imported and that printers were reluctant to tie up scarce capital in Irish language books, the language of print was almost universally English. We can trace where books circulated, but have much less idea of how many people actually read them. The details of language change and its impact on formal literacy are difficult to discern, but the broad trends over the early modern period seem to be clear enough. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries English as a language was increasingly used in Ireland either alongside or at

<sup>33</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 10–31.

<sup>34</sup> David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor (eds.), *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain: Volume III, 1400–1557* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pt. 3.



the expense of Irish.<sup>35</sup> In addition, formal literacy seems to have increased substantially. In large urban settlements—most notably Dublin—the ability to sign one's name appears to have been nearly universal among the 'middling sort' by 1700.<sup>36</sup> By the middle of the eighteenth century women had begun to acquire the skill of reading in significant numbers and they start to appear on book subscription lists, indicating that they had begun to exercise influence on the world of print from this point.<sup>37</sup> The culmination of this process are the publishing successes of Charlotte Brooke and Maria Edgeworth.<sup>38</sup> Equally important was the downward social drift of print in the form of cheap, readily available works with large print runs. These reached a wide audience not only through the traditional means of retailing print (printers' shops and merchants), but also through peddlers and other itinerant sellers.<sup>39</sup> The rise of the newspaper from the 1690s epitomizes a trend towards the wider dispersal of print.<sup>40</sup>

This volume aims to chart the impact of print through an examination of key areas of Irish life and literary practice. No area of Irish life was affected—and altered—more by print than religion (see Chapter 10). The impact of both the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation in Ireland required contemporaries not simply to declare that they were Christian but to explain what sort of Christian they were. Print, particularly in the form of the catechism, provided standard answers from a confessional point of view, which allowed both Protestants and Catholics to explain why they adhered to their respective faiths. Confessional positions inevitably had political consequences and the practice of politics was also affected by the diffusion of print culture (see Chapters 11 and 12). At an administrative level the Dublin government used the standardization that print provided to explain and justify its positions. Political controversy took on a new character with the advent of print. The rise of the pamphlet from the 1640s, and the spread of

<sup>35</sup> Garrett Fitzgerald, 'Estimates for Baronies of Minimum Levels of Irish-Speaking Amongst Successive Decennial Cohorts: 1771–1781 to 1861–1871', *PRIA*, 84C (1984), 117–55. See also Alan Bliss, 'The English Language in Early Modern Ireland', in T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin, and F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland: Volume III, Early Modern Ireland, 1534–1691* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 546–60.

<sup>36</sup> Toby Barnard, 'Learning, the Learned and Literacy in Ireland, c. 1660–1760', in Toby Barnard, Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, and Katharine Simms (eds.), *A Miracle of Learning: Studies in Manuscripts and Irish Learning* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 209–35.

<sup>37</sup> Máire Kennedy, 'Women and Reading in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in Cunningham and Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading*, 78–98.

<sup>38</sup> See Ann Owens Weekes, *Irish Women Writers: An Uncharted Tradition* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1990), ch. 2; Norman Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800* (Harlow: Longmans, 2002), 48–53.

<sup>39</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man: Popular Culture in Ulster, 1700–1900* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1987); Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997).

<sup>40</sup> Robert Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper, 1685–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

the newspaper from the 1690s, allowed for the widespread dissemination of conflicting political views and interpretations in cheap and easily available form. A defining moment in this process was the publication of Jonathan Swift's *Drapier's Letters* in the early 1720s in the wake of the Declaratory Act of 1720, the Wood's half-pence dispute, and economic dislocation. By applying techniques of using print in political controversy, which he had learned in London, Swift helped to politicize a generation of Irish Protestants, thus laying the foundations of the 'Patriot Movement' of the late eighteenth century.<sup>41</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century 'paper wars' were a normal feature of Irish political life, as in the 1780s and 1790s when conservatives and radicals battled for political ascendancy.<sup>42</sup> On the level of more mundane politics, the appearance of parliamentary debates in print and the publication of division lists (whereby the specific political decisions of MPs became public knowledge) all served to expand the compass of political awareness and activity.

Whereas politics and religion were of central importance in defining identities in early modern Ireland, one important way in which those identities were articulated was through the writing of history. Historical writing was a deeply contested area where different groups of natives and newcomers turned to the past to justify their present positions (see Chapters 14, 15, and 16). The writing and publication of history was well established before the arrival of print and scribal publication of history continued long into the eighteenth century. Geoffrey Keating's history of Ireland, written in the 1630s, was not published until 1723, but circulated widely in manuscript.<sup>43</sup> In this sense historical writing shared some of the same experiences that political writing had with the coming of print. The past clearly had a relevance to present reality.

If the public spheres of religion, politics, and historical debate were all transformed by a growing volume of print that encouraged debate and controversy the more private task of reading for entertainment was equally affected. For those who read poetry, the new literary form of the novel, or playbooks, print was also a major influence on their reading experience (see Chapters 17 and 18). The capacity of the press to produce large numbers of nearly identical copies of particular works and the marketing networks

<sup>41</sup> David Nokes, *Jonathan Swift: A Hypocrite Reversed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 280–300. See also Joseph McMinn (ed.), *Swift's Irish Pamphlets: An Introductory Selection* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1991).

<sup>42</sup> W. J. McCormack, *The Dublin Paper War of 1768–1788: A Bibliographical and Critical Inquiry, Including an Account of the Origins of Protestant Ascendancy and its 'Baptism' in 1792* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993).

<sup>43</sup> Bernadette Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating: History, Myth and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

available to distribute these ensured that literature moved from being the privilege of a few to become an integral part of the public sphere. However, this change was not restricted simply to what we might regard as canonical works. Printers, sensing the possibility of profit, turned their presses to producing long runs of cheap pamphlets. Some of these were already well-established classics, such as *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, *The Seven Wise Masters*, and *Guy of Warwick*. These cheap books were almost everywhere in early modern Ireland. A copy of *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, for example, was owned by the godly provost of Trinity College, Dublin, in the 1650s and the Catholic bishop of Ferns in the late seventeenth century, as well as being disseminated among the 'lower sort' by chapmen. Moreover, *The Seven Champions* also circulated in Irish and in manuscript.<sup>44</sup> In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these familiar popular classics were added to by printers who took to publishing criminal biography, gallows' speeches, and other sensational literature intended to capture the public imagination and the public's money.<sup>45</sup> Broadsheets such as those that retailed gallows' speeches provided a link between the oral and the printed worlds. However, reading could never be exactly the same experience as seeing or hearing so that the reading of these works, like that of playbooks, allowed for multiple re-fashionings of the event in the minds of individual readers.<sup>46</sup>

If print was used to disseminate political and religious debate, as well as provide diversion and entertainment, it was also used by the learned to communicate the results of reflection or experimentation (Chapter 19). The growth of the Royal Society in London and the Dublin Philosophical Society provides the context for the growing interest in science in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Ireland. This was underpinned by political developments as many Irish landlords began to see Ireland as a kingdom rather than a colony and desired to learn more about the land of Ireland and to use the latest scientific ideas to improve their estates there. In the eighteenth century this manifested itself in the rise of patriotism and the cult of improvement and building. A large number of scientific books were published and widely read, because the printing press was a necessary adjunct to the culture of science. Scientific culture was of its nature discursive, a trend that the two major societies encouraged.<sup>47</sup> Such discussion was not, of course,

<sup>44</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica*, no. 29 (1995–7), 36, 44–6.

<sup>45</sup> Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture*; James Kelly, *Gallows Speeches from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001).

<sup>46</sup> For the range of what was available on the Irish stage, see Christopher Morash, *A History of the Irish Theatre, 1601–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>47</sup> Science in England emerged from the same intellectual paradigm: see Adrian Johns, 'Reading and Experiment in the Early Royal Society', in Sharpe and Zwicker (eds.), *Reading, Society, and Politics*, 244–71.

confined to Ireland. The learned with interests in science such as William Molyneux and Archbishop King sent copies of their works to their friends throughout Europe, thus creating a network based on the printed book that transcended narrow local interests. Chapters 20 and 21 detail the influence that such large-scale print communities could have through the presence of foreign language books in Ireland.

## Conclusion

Bringing together a number of different disciplines: bibliographical, historical, literary, and sociological, the history of the book provides an important vantage from which to view the changes taking place in early modern Ireland. The commercial interests behind the print business, because of the need to grow volume in response to market demand, improved distribution techniques and quality, and touched the lives of the vast majority of those living in Ireland by 1800. Government conveyed the demands it made on its subjects through the medium of print and churches laid out the requirements for salvation. For those who debated whether the demands of government were just or the requirements of religion necessary, print was equally central.<sup>48</sup> Even if one did not have the skill of reading, print still played a central part in one's life. People often read in groups or in pairs, or the printed word was proclaimed to large gatherings in churches on Sunday. In this way the world of oral transmission and print moved together. However there was a fundamental difference between the two, as Robert Chambers, a Dublin Presbyterian minister, writing in the 1680s, colourfully expressed it: 'there is as much difference between hearing and reading, between a lively voice and breathless lines, as is between cold meat and hot'.<sup>49</sup> Whatever the gastronomic tastes of contemporary observers, the triumph of print was one of the central realities of the early modern world.

<sup>48</sup> For those issues see Raymond Gillespie, *Reading Ireland: Print, Reading and Social Change in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

<sup>49</sup> Union Theological College, Belfast, Robert Chambers, MS 'Explanation for Shorter Catechism', sig. A2.

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I

# PRINT CULTURE

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# Print Culture, 1550–1700

*Raymond Gillespie*

Between 1550 and 1700 Ireland underwent a series of mutations that would transform it from a fragmented polity into a recognizably modern state. The composition of the governing elite was modified, the distribution of resources within the country was changed radically, and the rules under which the economy operated became more commercialized. The social rules as established by law were fundamentally altered by the adoption of English common law at the expense of the older *brehon* law, or hybrid practices. The spread of print was part of, and reflected, the political and social transformation of early modern Ireland.<sup>1</sup> The expansion of a print culture, in turn, was underpinned by a shift in the balance between oral and written elements in the regulation of local societies. From the early sixteenth century, changes in political relationships at local level led to the committing to writing of matters that previously had been the subject of oral agreements in a largely non-literate culture. To meet these new demands native Irish lords, like their Anglo-Irish counterparts, were increasingly drawn into written culture. As evidence of their mastery of the world of documents they showed an interest in reading and writing and also began to acquire the accessories of that world such as seals for documents and spectacles.<sup>2</sup> In 1558 Maelmórdha O Reilly, lord of Breifne, had to borrow the seal of the Franciscan friary of Cavan to authenticate a deed, suggesting that the use of seals by the family was uncommon, yet his grandson, Sir John, owned his own seal.<sup>3</sup> Part of the driving force behind the growing significance of the written word was the spread of the common law that demanded that transactions be remembered and authenticated. As one late sixteenth-century partition of land in

<sup>1</sup> The arguments in this chapter are expanded in Raymond Gillespie, *Reading Ireland: Print, Reading and Social Change in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> Katharine Simms, 'Literacy and the Irish Bards', in Huw Pryce (ed.), *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 251–3.

<sup>3</sup> Gearóid Mac Niocaill, 'Cairt ó Mhaolmhordha Ó Raighilligh, 1558', *Breifne* 1 no. 2 (1959), 134–6; E. C. R. Armstrong, *Irish Seal Matrices and Seals* (Dublin, 1913), 19–20.



Tipperary recorded ‘muiridh an litir 7 mimghidhid an cuime’ (writing lasts, and memory departs).<sup>4</sup> Law is not the only social context discernable in this shift. Growing commercialism of the economy, combined with a shortage of coin, required the keeping of written records of financial transactions. Colonization also introduced new practices of landholding and estate management based on the written lease. The spread of centralized government with its printed proclamations and statutes also enhanced the status of writing. These developments took place piecemeal but by 1600 written documents in the form of leases, court pleadings, and proclamations, for example, were all much more familiar to the inhabitants of Ireland than they had been a century earlier.

## Books in Sixteenth-Century Ireland

The emergence of this widespread ability to deal with the written word in Ireland by 1600 was the essential prerequisite for the development of a print culture. Indeed this world of print, marked by standardization, reorganization, and preservation of written texts as well as new ways of interacting with those texts in comparison with earlier manuscript publication, may be said to have been firmly established in Ireland by 1551 when Humphrey Powell printed the *Book of Common Prayer* in Dublin using moveable type for the first time. Even before this date eastern Ireland had already been exposed to the world of print through trade. By 1545 the Dublin stationer James Dartas was already importing a wide range of printed works for retail in Dublin.<sup>5</sup> London printers may already have been producing books specifically for the Irish market by the 1540s.<sup>6</sup> Individuals and groups also imported reading material for their own use from both England and continental Europe. The survival of library lists for both the Earl of Kildare in the 1520s and the Franciscans in Youghal by the early sixteenth century provides evidence that they had substantial libraries, presumably directly imported by themselves.<sup>7</sup> Throughout the sixteenth century it was external trade that determined the availability of books in Dublin since the press there produced little of significance apart from proclamations and a few liturgical works. Some families in

<sup>4</sup> 29th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records of Ireland (Dublin, 1897), 40–1.

<sup>5</sup> L. M. Oliver, ‘A Bookseller’s Account Book’, in *Harvard Library Bulletin* 14 (1965), 149–52.

<sup>6</sup> D. B. Quinn, ‘Edward Walsh’s *The Office and Duty in Fyghtyng for our Country* (1545)’, in *Irish Booklore* 3 (1976–7), 28–31.

<sup>7</sup> Gearóid Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Crown Surveys of Lands, 1540–1* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992), 312–14, 355–7; Catherine Moore, ‘The Library Catalogues of the Eighth and Ninth Earls of Kildare’, unpublished M.Phil. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1998; Colmán Ó Clabaigh, *The Franciscans in Ireland, 1400–1534* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 160–80.

eastern Ireland did have access to the world of books. The family library of the Stanihursts in Dublin seems to have been a significant collection of books and it was used by the Jesuit Edmund Campion in compiling his history of Ireland in 1570.<sup>8</sup> Many of the same works cited by Campion, and indeed by Richard Stanihurst in his history of Ireland, also feature in a manuscript compilation of the late sixteenth century, the *Book of Howth*.<sup>9</sup> From this we might infer something of their secular reading interests although this is clearly a very selective approach since some important classes of work, such as poetry and religious works, would not normally be cited as historical sources. History and law are clearly predominant in the works mentioned with standard English chronicles, including those of Robert Fabian and Edward Hall and the *Polychronicon*, as well as the Latin works of Hector Boece and John Mair on Scotland. Similar titles are also found in the Earl of Kildare's library. From a New English perspective the writings of Barnaby Rich composed in Dublin in the late sixteenth century suggest that other English contemporary works were certainly available in the city including George Pettie's *Pettie's Palace of Pleasure* and William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure*. If Ludowick Bryskett's *Discourse of civill life* (1606) is based around a discussion in Dublin in the late sixteenth century, as it claims, then a range of classical works must also have been available there. More mundanely churches, such as St Werburgh's, invested in printed books (presumably liturgical ones) and had those repeatedly rebound in the late sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> All this activity was supported by the Queen's Printer and a few independent booksellers, such as William Leath who appears in the records in 1566; they presumably operated under licence.<sup>11</sup> Although the evidence is sometimes circumstantial it seems clear that by the beginning of the seventeenth century print culture was well established within the area of the Pale around Dublin.

To what extent the culture of print spread outside Dublin and its hinterland is a matter of conjecture. In Connacht some of the elite, such as the Earl of Clanricard in east Galway, emulated their contemporaries in eastern Ireland by purchasing books in Europe for their own use.<sup>12</sup> The networks of trade and religion ensured that the world of print also touched the wider population in these areas. In the 1590s merchants from Limerick and Galway, as well as Munster towns, were importing books for distribution across the local hinterlands. In many cases the books available for sale were cheap, popular books

<sup>8</sup> Colm Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst: The Dubliner, 1547–1618* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1981), 28.

<sup>9</sup> *Cal. Carew Mss: Book of Howth*.

<sup>10</sup> Representative Church Body Library, Dublin, MS P326/27/1/15, 17, 19, 20.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000), 225–7, 330–1, 357. For binding see Raymond Gillespie (ed.), *The Proctor's Accounts of Peter Lewis* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), 68.

<sup>12</sup> *Cal. S. P. Ire., 1601–3*, p. 484.

such as chapbooks and almanacs. In other cases schoolbooks formed the spine of trade, presumably for the larger towns.<sup>13</sup> Again in 1572 William Piers, the governor of Carrickfergus, noted that ‘a bargue from England has arrived here with news in print that Sir Thomas Smith hath a gift of part of Ulster and the Ards’ and the local native Irish lord, Brian Mac Phelim O'Neill, knew about the ‘certain books in print’ spreading that message.<sup>14</sup> Religious works, particularly Catholic ones, may have found a different route. In 1584 it was reported from Connacht that missals and primers were being confiscated from the common people for which the provost martial claimed, ‘I am threatened with the greatest curses they have’.<sup>15</sup> Smuggling Catholic books into Ireland in the late sixteenth century was not uncommon.<sup>16</sup> These may have been distributed by clergy or sold by merchants but were certainly common enough to be noticed. By the late sixteenth century few in Ireland could have avoided the presence of print.

## Books in Early Seventeenth-Century Ireland

In some ways the early seventeenth century simply represents an intensification of the sixteenth-century patterns of contact with print. The establishment of Trinity College, Dublin, in 1592 and the reinvigoration of cathedral life in the city might have been expected to generate work for the Dublin press but this did not happen. The Dublin press was taken up largely with the business of central government, the reach of which had been much extended after 1603. In the late sixteenth century 200 or 300 copies of a proclamation might meet government demand but 500 copies of an important order were necessary by the early seventeenth century. Later in the seventeenth century Dublin alone would require 600 copies of a corporation document, such was demand for print.<sup>17</sup> Such work absorbed the capacity of the single press at work in Dublin and in the 1650s when the Welsh Puritan John Jones attempted to print a godly work in Welsh in Dublin he found the progress of the printing much delayed by the amount of government work the press had to do.<sup>18</sup> As a result, legal trade and illegitimate smuggling provided the necessary channels through which books reached Irish readers. The acquisition by the

<sup>13</sup> Raymond Gillespie, ‘The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640’, in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books Beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 1–17.

<sup>14</sup> PRO, SP63/35/2, 45.

<sup>15</sup> PRO, SP63/108/13.

<sup>16</sup> For example, *Cal. S.P. Ire., 1574–85*, p. 286; *Cal. S.P. Ire., 1608–10*, p. 192.

<sup>17</sup> Raymond Gillespie, ‘The Circulation of Print in Seventeenth-Century Ireland’, *Studia Hibernica* no. 29 (1995–7), 46–7; J.T. and Lady Gilbert (eds.), *Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin*, 19 vols. (Dublin, 1889–1944), vi. 126.

<sup>18</sup> NLW, MS 11440D, p. 137.

London Society of Stationers in 1618 of the sole rights to print books and to sell specified books may have accelerated this trend since they certainly imported a wide range of basic books, including schoolbooks, from London for the Irish market.<sup>19</sup>

By 1640 there are a number of important indications of the extent to which the inhabitants of Ireland had become absorbed into a print culture. Dublin could then support professional booksellers. In 1641 Richard Sergier and John Crook deposed that they had for the previous five years kept a stationer's shop 'well furnished with marte and English books' in Dublin. The shop was probably in Castle Street near the gate of Dublin Castle.<sup>20</sup> As well as serving the city such booksellers also fulfilled direct orders for those living in the countryside. Travellers between rural Ireland and the capital would also carry books for friends and relatives. In the 1630s the young Donogh Clancy from Clare used his brother, Thomas, a student in Trinity College, Dublin, to buy copies of books for him including Cicero, Ovid, and Aesop's *Fables* so that he could be 'as handsome a scholar as any of my age'.<sup>21</sup>

A second indicator of the spread of print culture in the seventeenth century is the growth of libraries, some imported by gentry and supplemented with local Irish purchases, but others assembled over two or more generations of local buying. Perhaps the largest of these, that of Lord Conway at Portmore in County Antrim, accounted for 8,000 titles in the 1630s by comparison with just under 100 volumes in the Kildare library a century earlier.<sup>22</sup> Conway was an inveterate book buyer and much of this library was clearly imported as the requirement of a gentleman's house although a few locally published titles occur. It reflects all branches of learning from divinity through philosophy and science to literature, history, music, and 'useful arts'. More restrained was the library of the Limerick Catholic doctor Thomas Arthur with 293 titles, mainly of a medical nature, which was mostly acquired during Arthur's stay in Paris. Arthur's contemporary, the Protestant Christopher Sexton, had a library in Limerick of 131 titles.<sup>23</sup> Sexton's library was the product of both his father's book buying and his own. Rather over a third of the books concerned religion, the remainder being works of history, law, and practical treatises.

A wider view of book ownership is possible from the lists of losses provided by those who were caught up in the rising of 1641.<sup>24</sup> These depositions are not a random sample of the population and there are few depositions from the very rich or poor. Some groups, such as the clergy, are over-represented. A further problem is that books were not systematically recorded as losses and

<sup>19</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', *IESH* 15 (1988), 81–8.

<sup>20</sup> TCD, MS 809, f. 266.

<sup>21</sup> TCD, MS MUN/P/23/252.

<sup>22</sup> Public Library, Armagh, Library catalogue of the second Viscount Conway.

<sup>23</sup> BL, Add. MS 31885, ff. 8–13; Add. MS 19865, ff. 74–8.

<sup>24</sup> TCD, MSS 809–39.

in some cases may be buried in a general rubric such as ‘household stuff’ or ‘other goods’. Of those who did report losses of books in their list of losses over half occur in the depositions of the clergy. Slightly over a quarter of those who lost books were either self-styled gentlemen or those whose scale of losses would qualify them for that title. In some cases these book losses may be related not simply to gentry status but to the sort of roles the gentry were to carry out. The gentry who lost books were variously described as justices of the peace, an estate agent, the registrar of the vice-admiral of Connacht, and surveyor of the King’s mines in Tipperary. All these functions would have required the regular consultation of printed books. At the lower social ranges 6 per cent were classified as yeomen and the remaining 10 per cent comprised a miscellaneous group of the wives of murdered book owners, a weaver, an innkeeper, a clothier, and a doctor. Clergy undoubtedly had significant libraries. Using the valuations of book losses by clergy it appears that their books accounted for between 3 and 16 per cent of total losses, with most above 5 per cent, whereas in the case of gentlemen most book losses were under 5 per cent of total losses and in many cases less than 1 per cent. This broad pattern of a large group of book owners drawn from those professionally involved with books, such as clergy and (although not represented in the depositions) lawyers, seems to be confirmed from other evidence. The 1641 deposition of the Dublin booksellers Crook and Sergier, for instance, claimed that they supplied books to ‘ministers and other customers of all professions throughout the kingdom’.<sup>25</sup> It is equally clear that books did penetrate further down the social scale and some of those who migrated to Ireland as craftsmen and tenants owned books. William Billingsley, a joiner, who came to Ireland from Liverpool in 1621 brought with him not only clothes, bedding, and joiner’s tools but books also.<sup>26</sup>

### *The Impact of Print*

Book ownership in itself, however, is a poor measure of the impact of the world of print. Those who did not own books often came into contact with the printed word through ephemera, such as proclamations or printed leases, which were becoming more common. Print could also be marshalled for use in propaganda wars.<sup>27</sup> Nor was an inability to read or the inability to speak English, the language of print, a bar to contact with print. Literacy in English and Irish may have been more extensive than has been assumed, particularly among the middling sort. Using the ability to sign as an indicator, which implies a high level of literacy, only three out of forty-seven Cavan natives

<sup>25</sup> TCD, MS 810, f. 4.

<sup>26</sup> PRO, E190/1332/11, f. 20.

<sup>27</sup> For an example see Gillespie, ‘The Circulation of Print’, 34.

who were associated with a petition to the lord deputy in 1629 lacked this skill.<sup>28</sup> For those who could not read, many would have heard the contents of the printed work since proclamations were read publicly and extracts from the Bible were read aloud in church or at home.<sup>29</sup>

The importance of print, and especially books, was not limited to the words on the page. Books could acquire a symbolic status. Protestants took oaths on the Bible and Catholics on mass books as symbols or gateways to that which was holy for them.<sup>30</sup> The destruction of Bibles by the insurgents in the early 1640s reflects the same set of perceptions of books as symbolic objects. The collecting of books for display in the form of libraries was also seen as an indicator of social status.<sup>31</sup> Print also seemed to convey authority in the way that speech and the written word could not. At a gathering in a house in Dublin in November 1641 one man, George Hackett, 'drew a little book which the examinant [Bartholomew Lennon] knewest was an almanac and there read the names of divers persons which the said Hackett were the principal rebels'. Hackett, according to his own deposition, was literate whereas most of the others were not. He was clearly using the book as a prop in his performance to convince others to whom the contents of the book, which probably did not contain any such list of names since none of the surviving almanacs do, would be seen as mysterious.<sup>32</sup> The power of print, read or not, was far more pervasive throughout society than a roll call of the owners of printed works can hint at.

## Books in Late Seventeenth-Century Ireland

In the years after 1660 the power of print grew dramatically. The print trades within Dublin expanded considerably. Printers and stationers organized themselves into the Guild of St Luke in 1670, and the power of the King's Printer in determining what would be published waned to the extent that by the 1690s the King's Printer no longer controlled what was printed in Dublin. The guild increasingly monopolized the role of deciding what would be published in the city and vouching for its authenticity.<sup>33</sup> The number of

<sup>28</sup> PRO, SP63/249/2A; Raymond Gillespie, 'Church, State and Education in Early Modern Ireland', in Maurice O'Connell (ed.), *O'Connell: Education, Church and State* (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 1992), 40–59.

<sup>29</sup> For examples see Raymond Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 16.

<sup>30</sup> *Cal. S.P. Ire., 1601–3*, p. 446; *Cal. S. P. Ire., 1600*, pp. 152, 294.

<sup>31</sup> Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 34–5.

<sup>32</sup> TCD, MS 809, ff. 180, 182, 184, 186, 190, 192, 196.

<sup>33</sup> Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 6–11.

printers at work in Dublin increased in the 1680s and again in the 1690s and the number of booksellers in the city quadrupled between 1660 and 1700.<sup>34</sup> This was reflected in a growth in the volume of material from the Dublin presses in the latter half of the seventeenth century. Some of this comprised reprints of works already available through London but by the end of the century the Dublin presses were being utilized by religious controversialists in a way that was new. William King, Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral and later Bishop of Derry, attacked in print both Catholics in the 1680s and Presbyterians in the 1690s and provoked spirited replies from both sides.<sup>35</sup>

Outside Dublin there was a rise in provincial printing in the late seventeenth century. The Kilkenny confederation had established printing presses in Kilkenny and Waterford in the 1640s but these were closed in the 1650s. However, in the 1650s provincial print began at Cork using the type from Waterford and by the 1690s a printing press was operating in Belfast.<sup>36</sup> There were probably also smaller endeavours that have left no trace in surviving imprints. Combined with this was a steady increase in the quantities of print being imported into Ireland. If the customs figures for imports of books in the late seventeenth century are to be believed the weight of books imported into Ireland probably doubled during the 1690s, the bulk of them being from England.<sup>37</sup> Certainly by the late 1690s Ireland was England's single largest export customer for books with 175 cwt being exported there. Next was Holland with 131 cwt and then Scotland with 119 cwt followed by Virginia with 108 cwt.<sup>38</sup> In addition, books were imported into Ireland from Scotland although the Scottish port books suggest this was a trade mainly to Ulster with Bibles and catechisms being the mainstay of the trade.<sup>39</sup>

Not only did increasingly large quantities of print appear in Ireland in the late seventeenth century but the mechanisms for its distribution became more efficient. The direct English trade supplied not only Dublin but also provincial Ireland. The port books for Bristol and Chester show that in the late seventeenth century those ports served a variety of provincial Irish towns. Ships from Bristol carried books to Youghal, Limerick, Cork, Killybegs, Sligo, and Derry whereas the Scottish trade served Belfast and Derry.<sup>40</sup> In addition to these direct shipments from overseas Dublin

<sup>34</sup> J. W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 28, 39.

<sup>35</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Print and Protestant Identity: William King's Pamphlet Wars, 1687–1697', in Vincent Carey and Ute Lotz-Heumann (eds.), *Taking Sides: Colonial and Confessional Mentalities in Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 231–50.

<sup>36</sup> William K. Sessions, *The First Printers in Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny* (York: Sessions, 1990); Wesley McCann, 'Patrick Neill and the Origins of Belfast Printing', in Peter Isaac (ed.), *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), 125–38.

<sup>37</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 41.

<sup>38</sup> PRO, CUST 3/1. National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, E72/10/3, 5, 6, 7; E72/19/2, 6, 8, 11, 13, 19, 22.

<sup>40</sup> For examples see PRO, E190/1138/1, E190/1139/3, E190/1140/3, E190/1144/1, E190/1149/1.

booksellers, such as Samuel Helsham, had a wide range of customers outside the city. Some customers both in the city and outside continued to order their books directly from London.<sup>41</sup> At least one Dublin almanac maker, John Whalley, probably used a network of general merchants throughout the country to distribute his publications. Where no such shops were available, as in parts of Connacht, he employed chapmen to carry his books to potential customers.<sup>42</sup> All this trade in books parallels a greater commercialization of the Irish economy in the late seventeenth century as the export of unprocessed goods was replaced by manufactures such as butter, barrelled beef, and linen cloth. This required a complex commercial network of markets and fairs and along this network books travelled also. Aside from these commercial channels clergy distributed books directly to their flocks. Sometimes the religious works they disseminated were smuggled and sometimes legitimately imported and some clergy of the Church of Ireland could avail of locally printed works.<sup>43</sup>

As previously, it is possible to see something of the effect of the growing volume of print available in Ireland in the late seventeenth century in the expansion of libraries. Those professionally involved in print, such as the clergy, accumulated more books than before. In 1661 Bishop Jones of Meath could boast ninety-nine titles in his library but by the end of the century Bishop Samuel Foley of Down and Connor had almost 1,700 titles in his library and in the 1680s Bishop Ward of Raphoe had just over 1,200 titles.<sup>44</sup> At a lower ecclesiastical level William King, rector of St Werburgh's, had 694 titles.<sup>45</sup> Lawyers too had substantial collections. Sir Jerome Alexander left 615 titles to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1673.<sup>46</sup> At a lower legal level a list of books entered in an almanac by an unnamed lawyer in 1689 names eighty titles, which composed his working library since they were described as being 'in my use'.<sup>47</sup> Some gentry also had large libraries but those of the middling sort were also assembling substantial collections. A list of Cornet Wilkinson's books, possibly in Kilkenny, had over a hundred books and another gentleman for Munster in the 1670s had almost eighty.<sup>48</sup> Both men seem to have had similar interests, classical works, religion (both devotional and controversial works), literary works, and in the case of the Munster list an interest in publication in the French language. Although no library lists have survived for those at the bottom of the social scale the production of cheap books by the

<sup>41</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 42–61; Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 42.

<sup>42</sup> Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 38–41.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 46–52.

<sup>44</sup> Representative Church Body Library, Dublin MS 25, ff. 98v–100; *A Catalogue of the Books of the Rt Rev Father in God, Samuel Foley, Late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor* (Dublin, 1695, ESTC R228123); TCD MS 865, ff. 295v–86v.

<sup>45</sup> TCD, MS 1490.

<sup>46</sup> TCD, MS MUN/LIB/1/5.

<sup>47</sup> NLI, microfilm P. 4529.

<sup>48</sup> NLI, MS 11048/141; 'A Seventeenth-Century Anglo Irish Library', *Irish Book Lover* 30 (1946–8),



Dublin presses from the 1660s would suggest a market for such works existed there, mainly in the private world of print. Almanacs, selling for a penny, as well as broadsheets also became more common after the 1660s.<sup>49</sup> Chapbooks, such as *The Seven Champions of Christendom* and *The Seven Wise Masters*, also appeared in Ireland after 1660 and so did criminal biographies, such as the story of Redmond O'Hanlon.<sup>50</sup> By the end of the century there was a sufficient popular market for titillation through criminal biography to begin issuing gallows speeches as broadsheets.<sup>51</sup>

Undoubtedly the greater availability of books played a part in this expansion of the role of print as did growing literacy in the later seventeenth century, probably linked with the commercialization of the economy. Certainly by the end of the century the signatures in the Dublin bail books, which reflect the world of the middling sort, suggest that over 80 per cent could sign their names but a greater number than this could probably read. Outside the capital the leases on the Herbert estate in County Kerry and the Hill estate in County Down were signed by between 73 and 85 per cent of the leasees.<sup>52</sup> However, such literacy in English understates the potential impact for print. Gaelic Ireland was also being drawn into the world of English language print culture, a development aided by a growing level of bilingualism. The Irish-speaking learned class began to take an interest in print. Certainly in the 1630s the scholar Geoffrey Keating consulted a wide range of English and Latin printed works in the compilation of his history of Ireland written in Irish.<sup>53</sup> In the 1650s the poet Dáibhí Cúndún listed as part of a poem the books that he had read. Although some were clearly manuscript works others, such as the history of Scotland by Hector Boece, were available in print and it may have been these he consulted.<sup>54</sup> Later in the century the Limerick poet Dáibhí Ó Bruadair explicitly named English language printed works he had consulted.<sup>55</sup> There is also evidence that some literary works in Irish were modelled on printed works, in English or French, that may have been in circulation in Irish-speaking Ireland.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Edward Evans, *A Historical and Bibliographical Account of Almanacs and Directories Published in Ireland from the Sixteenth Century* (Dublin, 1897).

<sup>50</sup> Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 44–6; Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 72–5, 91–3.

<sup>51</sup> James Kelly, *Gallows Speeches from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

<sup>52</sup> Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible', 12–13.

<sup>53</sup> Bernadette Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 83–101.

<sup>54</sup> Cecile O'Rahilly (ed.), *Five Seventeenth-Century Political Poems* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1952), 42.

<sup>55</sup> Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, 'Lost Worlds: History and Religion in the Poetry of Dáibhí Ó Bruadair', in Pádraigin Riggs (ed.), *Dáibhí Ó Bruadair: His Historical and Literary Context* (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 2001), 25.

<sup>56</sup> N. J. A. Williams (ed.), *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1981), xlv–lx; Brian Ó Cuív (ed.), *Párlíament na mBan* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1952),

### *The Social Meaning of Print*

The increasing penetration of the printed word into seventeenth-century Irish society did not oust existing means of communication in early modern Ireland. There remained a powerful oral tradition. The tradition of storytelling, for example, remained although by the end of the seventeenth century many of these tales had been written down for recitation or preservation.<sup>57</sup> Similarly the business of producing manuscripts still continued in tandem with print. The limited market for works requiring Irish type meant that it was uneconomic to produce such works without a large subvention from church or state. Significant capital investment in paper, the largest cost in book production, together with storage for books that did not sell quickly, was simply not possible in an undercapitalized business. As a result works in Irish tended to be published in manuscript form. Geoffrey Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, for instance, circulated widely in seventeenth-century Ireland thanks to the efforts of professional scribes who produced copies to meet specific orders.<sup>58</sup> Such scribal publication was not confined to Irish language works. Manuscripts of the works of literary coteries, such as that which existed around Katherine Philips in Dublin in the 1660s, certainly circulated widely among selected audiences.<sup>59</sup> Rigid demarcations between the worlds of manuscript and print are not possible. Although the availability of printed books improved greatly in the seventeenth century there were some who could not obtain their own copy of a printed work that they wanted, particularly in the case of illegally imported Catholic works. One Franciscan, Connor MacParlane, for instance, copied a printed devotional tract available in Dublin in the 1680s into his own commonplace books and also compiled a theological miscellany for his own use.<sup>60</sup> Again by the end of the seventeenth century a professional scribe had put Bonaventure O Eodhasa's *An Teagasc Críosaíde*, printed in Louvain in 1611, into manuscript and in Dublin, Cavan, and Fermanagh printed catechisms were also being copied in manuscript.<sup>61</sup>

Print was not intended to exist in isolation. It was intended to perform social functions, as manuscript publication and oral communication were

xxiv; Tadhg Ó Dúshláine, *An Eoraip agus Litríocht na Gaeilge, 1600–1650* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1987); Mícheál Mac Craith, *Lorg na hÍasachta ar na Dánta Grá* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1989).

<sup>57</sup> Alan Bruford, *Gaelic Folk-Tales and Medieval Romances* (Dublin: Educational Company of Ireland, 1969); also published as *Béaloides: Journal of the Folklore Society of Ireland* 34 (1966 [1969]), 55–64; George Denis Zimmerman, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 44–78.

<sup>58</sup> Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating*, 173–81.

<sup>59</sup> Patrick Thomas, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips* 3 vols. (Stump Cross, 1992), ii. 59–61.

<sup>60</sup> TCD, MS 1375; BL, Egerton MS 136.

<sup>61</sup> RIA, MS 23 L 19, ff. 49–104; TCD, MS 1383, pp. 110, 121; BL, Sloane MS 3567, f. 36ff; Egerton MS 196, ff. 36–69v.

also intended to do. Contemporaries recognized that print had a particular purpose within the range of possible ways of publication. As the Dublin Presbyterian minister Robert Chambers expressed it ‘there is as much difference between hearing and reading, between a lively voice and breathless lines as much as is between cold meat and hot’.<sup>62</sup> Sermons, for example, were intended to be heard rather than read. When a sermon moved from the medium of oral delivery to the printed form significant changes were necessary to tailor it to the new medium. Reading a printed text allowed the sort of meditation on words that the performance medium of the sermon did not. In the absence of the minister to convey authority the meaning of the text was to be divined by a reader, possibly in consultation with others in a group meeting around a text.<sup>63</sup> These perceptions of the differing functions of print led to it being used in a wide variety of ways. Some were enthusiastic about it. Thomas Gent, the York printer who was born in Dublin and served his unhappy apprenticeship to Patrick Campbell in the city, declared in his early eighteenth-century verse autobiography

Printing is sure a fine and curious art  
Esteemed by princes, great and mighty men  
Because the things obscure it doth impart  
More quick than numbers e’er could do by pen;  
So cheap withal—what manuscripts contain  
As saves the world of time with little pain.<sup>64</sup>

The late seventeenth-century Presbyterian minister of Benburb, John Kennedy, would have agreed, declaring in his notebook that the invention of printing led to ‘knowledge [being] greatly increased in men’s minds’. In particular printing had put the Bible into widespread circulation ‘and every one applied to find out the meaning of the original’ and communicate it to others rather than have that knowledge confined to clergy.<sup>65</sup>

Others were less certain of the benefits of print. For some its capacity to circulate ideas widely could be a source of disruption. As Dean George Rust declared in a preface to a funeral sermon in 1663, ‘I am well aware how indiscrete it is to expose that to the eye which was intended but for the ear’.<sup>66</sup> In the field of politics many contemporaries were well aware of the problems that print could cause. In the 1670s when the secretary of the Kilkenny

<sup>62</sup> Union Theological College, Belfast, Robert Chambers, MS ‘Explanation of the Shorter Catechism’, sig. A2.

<sup>63</sup> Raymond Gillespie, ‘The Reformed Preacher: Irish Protestant Preaching, 1660–1700’, in Alan J. Fletcher and Raymond Gillespie (eds.), *Irish Preaching, 700–1700* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 140–2.

<sup>64</sup> *The Life of Thomas Gent, Printer of York; Written by Himself* (London, 1832), 32.

<sup>65</sup> Presbyterian Historical Society, Belfast, PA 48, Notebook of John Kennedy, p. 56.

<sup>66</sup> George Rust, *A Sermon Preached at Newtown[ards] the 23 of October 1663 at the Funeral of the Honourable Hugh, Earl of Mountalexander* (Dublin, 1664, ESTC R182910), sig. A1v.

Confederation, Richard Bellings, came to write his history of the 1640s he refused to allow it to be printed, despite many rumours that it would be, because he feared the political divisions that the unrestricted circulation of the work would exacerbate. Instead it seems to have circulated in manuscript to a more selective readership.<sup>67</sup> In another instance the desire to minimize widespread conflict may lie behind the Duke of Ormond's unwillingness to enter into a printed debate with the Earl of Anglesea in the 1680s.<sup>68</sup> In religion too fear of fracturing local, delicately balanced, relationships may explain the shortage of locally printed works of religious controversy in early modern Ireland. It may also help to explain the care that Bishop King took to manage the controversy that he generated with the Presbyterians in the 1690s following the publication of his *Inventions of men in the worship of God* in 1694.<sup>69</sup>

### *The Working of Print*

Print culture was used best by those whose roles were most effectively complemented by the properties of print. The ability of the printed work to create standardization in texts and to disseminate those standard texts to a wide audience was clearly the most useful attribute in the public world of print. Perhaps the single greatest beneficiary of that culture of print was the Dublin administration. The early modern Irish 'political experiment' was principally concerned with creating a uniform commonwealth within the country with one king, one religion, and one set of cultural attributes. As the 1534 Act for the English Order Habit and Language expressed it

[there is] nothing which doth more contain and keep many of the [King's] subjects of this his said land in a savage and wild kind and manner of living than the diversity that is betwixt them in tongue, language, order and habit, which by the eye deceiveth the multitude and persuadeth unto them that be as it were of sundry sorts, or rather sundry countries, where indeed they should be wholly together one body whereof his Highness is the only head under God . . .<sup>70</sup>

In the early seventeenth century one commentator on the role of plantations echoed similar sentiments, declaring that the function of the land settlement was that 'by this means shall that people [the Irish] now grow into a body commoned and into a commonwealth before they wholly consisted of poor, proud gentry'.<sup>71</sup> Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries various

<sup>67</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Social Thought of Richard Bellings', in Micheál Ó Siochrú (ed.), *Kingdoms in Crisis: Ireland in the 1640s* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 214.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Perceval-Maxwell, 'The Anglesea-Ormond-Castlehaven Dispute, 1680-1682: Taking Sides about Ireland in England', in Carey and Lotz-Heumann (eds.), *Taking Sides*, 214-27.

<sup>69</sup> Gillespie, 'Irish Print and Protestant Identity', 231-4, 240-2, 247-9.

<sup>70</sup> Philomena Connolly (ed.), *Statute Rolls of the Irish Parliament, Richard III-Henry VIII* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 237.

<sup>71</sup> BL, Harley MS 3298, f. 30.

strategies for achieving this aim were tried, with varying degrees of success, but one remained constant, though little remarked on: print. It was print, for example, that made possible the standardization of the statutes and proclamations and their wide circulation to ensure that legislation edged out other forms of legal system.<sup>72</sup> In the sixteenth century legal handbooks published in England were used by local officials in Ireland but in the early seventeenth century a handbook for Irish justices of the peace by Richard Bolton was issued by the Dublin press.<sup>73</sup> Legal documents, such as leases, hearth money receipts, forms for debts, and court schedules came to have printed forms, which Dublin corporation was using by the 1560s, and by the late seventeenth century a wide range of printed forms for legal instruments was available from the Dublin stationers.<sup>74</sup> The Dublin government was therefore concerned to exercise a monopoly over the use of print and did this through the office of King's Printer in Dublin.<sup>75</sup> The widespread availability of printed legal documents may help to explain how the native Irish were drawn into the common law process so fully by the seventeenth century.<sup>76</sup> It is also not entirely coincidental that the explosion in the use of print after the 1660s followed on the breaking of the powers of the greater landlords by the Cromwellian regime. By the 1640s print was so indispensable to the workings of government that when the Irish Confederates set up their own administration in Kilkenny a printing press for the issuing of proclamations was one of their first priorities.<sup>77</sup> Again in the 1690s a printer was so central to the new Williamite government in Ireland that the king travelled with a London printer.<sup>78</sup>

Law was, of course, only one element in the construction of the commonwealth. A second, and equally important, element was religion. Religious allegiances in early modern Ireland were fragmented between the established church, Catholicism, and, in the late seventeenth century, a range of Nonconformist groups. Despite their difference all saw the importance of print in defining and maintaining confessional identities and in ensuring doctrinal uniformity within those groupings. The earliest Irish printings, the

<sup>72</sup> D. B. Quinn, 'Government Printing and the Publication of the Irish Statutes in the Sixteenth Century', *PRIA* 49 C (1941), 45–129.

<sup>73</sup> Richard Bolton, *A Justice of the Peace for Ireland* (Dublin, 1638, ESTC S107128).

<sup>74</sup> Dublin City Archives, MR/35, pp. 206, 662. The range of instruments is clear from the bookseller's stocklist of William Winter printed in Michael [Boyle], *Rules and Orders to be Used and Observed in the High Court of Chancery in Ireland* (Dublin, 1685, ESTC R218489), sigs. A3–3v.

<sup>75</sup> Mary Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent', *Irish Booklore* 4 (1980), 79–95.

<sup>76</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Negotiating Order in Early Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in M. J. Braddick and John Walter (eds.), *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 199–202.

<sup>77</sup> For examples Sessions, *The First Printers*, 218–54.

<sup>78</sup> William Sessions, 'Edward Jones: The Travelling Printer with William III in 1690', in William Sessions, *Further Irish Studies in Early Printing History* (York: Sessions, 1994), 24–52.

first Edwardian *Book of Common Prayer* (1551), the *Articles of Religion* (1566), and the Irish language catechism of John Kearney (1571), were all aimed at defining belief and worship so that uniformity could be maintained. Into the seventeenth century the uniformity of belief and worship of the Church of Ireland with its English equivalent was protected by the fact that most of the liturgical books in use in Ireland were imported from England. Again in devotional works the fact that English imports dominated the market meant that the language of belief in Ireland and England would be similar. Print, through devotional and practical works such as the *Whole Duty of Man*, could exercise a powerful cohesive influence on the established churches throughout the British Isles. Certainly by the end of the seventeenth century print was playing a considerable part in the revival of Church of Ireland fortunes in Dublin as bishops, clergy, and a few laymen began circulating cheap religious tracts in the city.<sup>79</sup>

Although the perspective of the Catholic church on salvation was very different it too saw print as an important cohesive force in creating a particular type of spirituality. A case in point is the stock of William Weston, a Catholic bookseller in Dublin, in the 1680s. Most of the books were devotional, intended to create the sort of spirituality associated with Trent rather than the more traditional types of devotion associated with holy wells and local saints.<sup>80</sup> Within dissenting print also formed an important focus for drawing together communities. The production of printed hymn books for the Dublin dissenting community in the 1690s represented part of a strategy of harnessing a fondness for singing with the need to ensure that correct doctrinal messages were conveyed.<sup>81</sup> Presbyterians had yet another perspective on the importance of print. It was through print that the Solemn League and Covenant, which some Scottish preachers claimed was 'the pathway to heaven' and declared 'the Covenant is as necessary as is the sacrament', became known in Ulster.<sup>82</sup> The text of the Covenant certainly circulated widely in Ulster in the seventeenth century. Copies printed in Scotland flooded into Ulster as part of the catechism and were distributed throughout the province by chapmen.<sup>83</sup> By 1680 the Duke of Ormond commented of the Covenant, 'I find great industry is used in dispersing them through this

<sup>79</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Lay Spirituality and Worship, 1558–1750: Holy Books and Godly Readers', in Raymond Gillespie and W. G. Neeley (eds.), *The Laity and the Church of Ireland, 1000–2000* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 137–51.

<sup>80</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Catholic Religious Cultures in the Diocese of Dublin, 1614–97', in James Kelly and Dáire Keogh (eds.), *History of the Catholic Diocese of Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 132–5.

<sup>81</sup> Raymond Gillespie, '“A Good and Godly Exercise”: Singing the Word in Irish Dissent, 1660–1701', in Kevin Herlihy (ed.), *Propagating the Word of Irish Dissent, 1650–1800* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 28–45.

<sup>82</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 8, f. 478; Carte MS 10, f. 336.  
<sup>83</sup> National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, E72/10/3(1), 7, E72/19/2, 6, 19, 22; Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 43–4.

kingdom especially through the northern counties.<sup>84</sup> Archbishop King of Dublin later claimed that by 1694 there was a Belfast printing of the text and such was the demand by the early eighteenth century the printers 'let their frames at Belfast stand unbroken and print them as they find occasion as printers do often do with the almanacs'.<sup>85</sup> As a result the printed word became a central defining element in Ulster Presbyterianism.

At one level print moved forward both the process of state building and the establishment of confessional identities through its ability to standardize and promulgate texts. However there were limits to the uses of print culture. Readers who engaged with print did not necessarily extract from the printed word what they were supposed to take. The Bible, for instance, was a complex text subject to more than one interpretation and many read it in ways that the clergy would not have approved of.<sup>86</sup> Devotional works were likewise subject to many readings, orthodox and unorthodox.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, proclamations may have left the Dublin press in a standard form but when it came to their formal reading at the markets of the county towns their performance could introduce an unwelcome interpretation of their meaning. In 1629, for instance, a soldier reading a proclamation in Drogheda 'made it seem like a May game', according to the Lord Deputy, since he was drunk while reading it.<sup>88</sup> Again others simply avoided contact with printed works that they did not wish to read. As it was claimed in 1577, the Jesuit James Archer had sworn in Louvain against Queen Elizabeth's jurisdiction 'and to read not in no English book'.<sup>89</sup> A variant on this was reported in the 1580s when it was claimed that some Catholic clergy who had nominally conformed when forced to go to church 'they carry with them a book in Latin of the Common Prayer set forth and allowed by your Majesty. But they read nothing of it or can well read. . .'.<sup>90</sup> Print was an important force in shaping the world of early modern Ireland but it was not an irresistible one.

## Conclusion

Over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries print became an increasingly common feature in the lives of those who lived in early modern

<sup>84</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 45, f. 554.

<sup>85</sup> TCD, MS 750/5/171–2.

<sup>86</sup> Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible'.

<sup>87</sup> Raymond Gillespie, *Devoted People: Belief and Religion in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 153–8.

<sup>88</sup> C. E. Elrington and J. H. Todd (eds.), *The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher*, 17 vols. (Dublin, 1847–64), xv. 438.

<sup>89</sup> W. M. Brady (ed.), *State Papers Concerning the Irish Church in the Time of Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1868), 23.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 118.

Ireland. Much of this was ephemeral rather than in book format. Proclamations, receipts, and leases had all become commonplace by the late seventeenth century. More serious works had to be imported and were sold throughout the country rather than being produced in Dublin. As such their distribution rested on the commercialization that was a feature of the late seventeenth century when print in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ireland reached its apogee. That such works should have come from England was an important feature of Irish life for it ensured that the languages of politics and religion would be largely the same in both countries. In a more fundamental way print also made possible the workings of Dublin government in the localities because of its properties of standardization and wide distribution. It also allowed the establishment and reshaping of other institutions, most notably the church. The effectiveness of those processes was, however, limited by the desire of the reader to accept their messages but the fact that they existed at all was vital to the social changes of early modern Ireland. By 1700 the world of late medieval Ireland had disappeared and the spread of a print culture had played an important part in its downfall.



## Print Culture, 1700–1800

*Toby Barnard*

Print gradually permeated eighteenth-century Ireland. It escaped from the closets of the learned and wealthy into the routines of the middling and lower orders of society. The outlines—if not yet the details—of the greater variety and availability of printed wares are clear. The great majority were in the English language. Titles, copy, and printed sheets were frequently imported from Britain. Outside England, Ireland was the Hanoverians' most populous possession and so potentially a lucrative market. Those active in the book trade served as intermediaries for customers who wished to acquire works published in Britain or Dublin, taking subscriptions or deposits. The heavy reliance on what London offered strengthened the impression that, in the reception of print, Ireland frequently functioned as a cultural province and economic dependency. At the same time, the growing access to and use of books reflected and even aggravated distinctive features of Ireland, such as ethnic and linguistic difference, apparent economic retardation, and endemic poverty. If printing drove wedges between a fortunate few and the many, the Irish situation might vary in chronology and detail but did not differ in essentials from what was happening in provincial England, Wales, Scotland, and colonial North America.

English intentions towards Ireland had long included spreading the English language and suppressing the vernacular. By the early eighteenth century, opponents of the notion that either the state should promote printing in Irish or the state church should promote preaching and teaching in the same language pointed to the scarcity of those able to read it, whether in printed or handwritten versions. It seemed, too, that economic and social pressures were entrenching English and encouraging bilingualism. The urgency of earning bread in an inhospitable environment and of engaging with the processes of law and government increased the pressures to learn English. These incentives help to explain the better provision of schooling, which in turn gradually improved levels of literacy, especially in the larger towns. The gulf widened between those able, if they chose, to cooperate with the new English order and

to participate fully in trade and law and those who, because of the language that they spoke and lack of literacy, were athwart these worlds.

By the early eighteenth century, printers established themselves permanently in the larger towns outside Dublin, such as Belfast, Cork, Limerick, and Waterford.<sup>1</sup> As yet they were little occupied in printing what might conventionally be described as books. Operators eked out livelihoods by printing tickets, labels, receipts, indentures, and handbills. Many doubled as book-sellers or stationers or dealt in sundry goods, of which patent medicines were particularly popular. Although the growth of schools and of the literate increased the demand for books, it was as yet too modest to justify many specialists outside the capital. In the provinces, books were still bought from general merchants. From the 1720s, for example, traders in the inland towns of Birr, Edenderry, and Nenagh sold grammars, primers, and testaments alongside motley fabrics, haberdashery, groceries, ironmongery, rat traps, and seeds.<sup>2</sup>

What merchants with their fixed premises could offer was supplemented by hawkers, whose packs customarily included chapbooks, broadsides, and handbills. By-laws debarred hawkers in Dublin from selling articles of any great monetary worth. They distributed what was proffered by the specialist printers and booksellers in the larger towns (Figures 1 and 2).<sup>3</sup> Small-sized but thick publications, running to as much as 144 pages in duodecimo format, were known as chapmen's books and sold usually at sixpence each. Chapbooks, printed on a single sheet folded into thirty-two pages, cost only one penny. In between were the topical pamphlets, which multiplied from the 1720s onwards. The tracts ranged in price from 2d to 6½d. Cheaper still were the ballads and broadsides, cashing in on the noteworthy and notorious. They were to be had from the pedlars for a halfpenny or farthing.<sup>4</sup> Even in Dublin, at least on the evidence of drawings made by Hugh Douglas Hamilton in 1760, print was hawked through the streets rather than always being sold by those with fixed shop premises.<sup>5</sup> The respectable, strolling through the thoroughfares of the capital, did not disdain buying what the chapmen touted.

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Wheeler, 'The Spread of Provincial Printing in Ireland before 1850', *Irish Booklore*, 1/1 (1978), 7–19.

<sup>2</sup> Inventories of T. Egan, Birr, 16 June 1721, and of D. Darragh, Nenagh, 27 Jan. 1743[4], BL, Add. MSS 31881, f. 295; 31882, f. 145v; inventory of J. Eves, Edenderry, 16 4th month, 1729, wills and inventories of the Edenderry monthly meeting, Friends' Historical Library, Dublin, MM III L.1; T. Barnard, 'The World of Goods and County Offaly in the Early Eighteenth Century', in T. P. O'Neill (ed.), *Offaly: History and Society* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1998), 379.

<sup>3</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1987), 29–34; J. W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 11; Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 57–8, 190–1, 220–1.

<sup>4</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 30–4; NLI, MS 16091.

<sup>5</sup> William Laffan (ed.), *The Cries of Dublin Drawn from the Life by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1760* (Dublin: Irish Georgian Society, 2003), 110–11, 124–5, 128–9.



1. 'Rare news in the *Evening Post*', Hamilton's drawing shows how newspapers and other ephemeral publications were hawked in the streets of mid-eighteenth-century Dublin. *The Evening Post* had started publication in Queen Anne's reign and by 1760 was published by Alex McCulloh. R. Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper, 1685–1760* (Cambridge, 1967), 78. This image is discussed in W. Laffan (ed.), *The Cries of Dublin Drawn from the Life by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1760* (Dublin, 2003), 128, n. 37.

## The Politics of Print

Some of these productions carried messages, reprised in talk and song, unwelcome to governments. Although political upheavals dramatically disturbed seventeenth-century Ireland, they did little to stimulate the Dublin presses. Until the 1690s, newspapers were few and irregular. A controversy over English interference in Irish trade during 1696–8 occasioned more than a



2. 'A foolish travelling stationer'. Hamilton's image of 1760 brings to life a character who was probably well known in Dublin. It also suggests the way in which printed wares were advertised and sold in the streets by itinerants. The drawing is discussed in W. Laffan (ed.), *The Cries of Dublin Drawn from the Life by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, 1760* (Dublin, 2003), p. 110, n. 28.

dozen pamphlets. However, Irish publishers scarcely cashed in.<sup>6</sup> It remained possible to satisfy the interested in Ireland with imports from England. Soon this changed: Irish producers were bestirring themselves before the end of Queen Anne's reign. A clash between the municipality of Dublin and the regime in the Castle provoked printed invective. Thereafter, Dublin writers,

<sup>6</sup> P. H. Kelly, 'The Irish Woollen Export Prohibition Act of 1699: Kearney Re-visited', *IESH* 7 (1980), 22–44.

publishers, and printers responded inventively and viciously to quarrels. Sometimes, they were suspected of creating or at least prolonging the controversies.

This change—printing in Dublin rather than simply shipping in what was produced in London—denoted both a livelier political consciousness and a greater place for the medium in politics. A second development, which again can be read as a measure of increasing literacy and a related political activism, was to take the messages into the provinces. By the eighteenth century, print was more easily sold outside the capital. Also, printers worked in the main towns. For the most part, they remained receptors and distributors of what came from the metropolis. Few original titles in the political debates were published first in the provinces. Instead they furnished local examples of national grievances. During the agitations of the 1750s, numerous titles expressed—or purported to express—opinions in Ardraccon, Armagh, Ballyjamesduff, Bandon, Kinsale, and Monaghan. However, the effusions were published in either Dublin or London.<sup>7</sup> In some, parochial concerns were aired, but usually to illustrate larger themes of oligarchic tyranny, ministerial folly, or British insensitivity. The Irish provinces took time to be incorporated into a national, let alone Britannic, political culture in which print was almost instinctively employed. Between 1722 and 1724, squires, magistrates, and freeholders shared disquiet over the patent of an English entrepreneur, Wood, to mint small coin for Ireland. In several counties, notables petitioned against Wood's halfpence. However, the petitions seem not to have found their way into print. Instead they were sent in manuscript to the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council. Similarly, the numerous addresses, which proclaimed the loyalty of Irish counties and boroughs to the Hanoverians when the Young Pretender arrived in Scotland during 1745, remained in manuscript.<sup>8</sup> They were, however, mentioned in the newspapers. By the 1750s, this reticence was abandoned. The disaffected, as so often, first grasped the potential of print, and accordingly employed it to harry an unpopular government. Typical was the action

<sup>7</sup> *Address from the Independent Electors of the County of Westmeath* (London, 1754, ESTC T100635); *Case of the Hon. Francis Caulfield, esq.* (n.p., [1753]); *An Extract of a Letter from Armagh, dated October the 31st, 1753* ([?Dublin], 1753, ESTC T210305); T. C. Barnard, 'Considering the Inconsiderable: Electors, Patrons and Irish Elections, 1650–1761', in D. W. Hayton (ed.), *The Irish Parliament in the Eighteenth Century: The Long Apprenticeship* (Edinburgh, 2001), 107–27; *A Letter from a Burgess of Monaghan, to the Parish Clerk of Ardraccon* (Dublin, 1754, ESTC T155187); *A Letter from Patrick Taylor, of Ballyjames-Duff, to his Cousin Jemmy in Dublin, upon a Late Paper War in the Metropolis* (Dublin, 1749, ESTC T109005).

<sup>8</sup> Addresses from Co. Mayo and from Co. Cavan, 6 Oct. 1724, PRO, SP 63/384, 171–8, 191; loyal addresses from Counties Clare, Tyrone, Louth, Londonderry, Cavan, Down, Westmeath, Limerick, Donegal, Fermanagh, Armagh, Leitrim, Longford, Waterford, 24 Sept.–14 Nov. 1745, *ibid.*, SP 63/408/114, 124, 153, 179, 181, 183, 185, 187, 193, 202, 211, 213.

in 1755 of the chairman of a patriot club in County Down in having its lists of toasts inserted into the newspapers.<sup>9</sup>

Other stages in the strengthening of the habit, first of Dublin and then of the provinces, to comment on current affairs can be documented. From the 1690s, the outcome of parliamentary and even municipal elections was frequently challenged. To sway opinion, petitions were printed. Initially, these rehearsed the arguments that were put to the House of Commons' committee for elections, and were intended for its members rather than for a larger constituency of the interested.<sup>10</sup> By the 1720s, it seemed that, thanks to printing, this hermetic world was opening. Troubles in Limerick were reported to a wider readership. By doing so, the divisions were deepened and perpetuated. Officers of the garrison were pitted against municipal officers; former and suspected Tories against ardent Whigs; locals against strangers. At least two publications relating to the turbulence in 1726 survive. One was a broadside without imprint.<sup>11</sup> The second, a more substantial account, was produced in London. Both warned that the presumptions of the commander and his troops threatened civil liberties. The voluminous account might alert locals to their danger, but, perhaps more deliberately, connected the trouble with other examples of British maladroitness towards Ireland.<sup>12</sup> Provincial episodes afforded fresh ammunition with which to attack measures and ministers. The productions were directed to the concerned in England and Dublin, more than to the Irish provinces. Over time this focus shifted, particularly with the increase of potential buyers and readers in the locality. During the 1740s, the dean of the Church of Ireland cathedral in Limerick, Charles Massy, warred against a corrupt civic oligarchy. Consciously he linked his battle with the concurrent one of Charles Lucas in Dublin. Confident of a more buoyant local market, Massy had his history of the struggle published in Limerick itself in 1749.<sup>13</sup> *A Letter* of 1760 added to the publicity.<sup>14</sup>

Massy's printer in Limerick rarely prepared such solid fare.<sup>15</sup> He, like other provincial (and many Dublin) operatives, depended on humdrum jobs: broadsides, ballads, and lampoons. A rare sample of these staples of the provincial presses survives from 1783: a seventy-four-page volume assembled

<sup>9</sup> PRONI, D 1556/16/14/21 and 22.

<sup>10</sup> For example, *The Case of James Lennox, Esq; in Relation to an Election of a Knight of the Shire in the County of Londonderry* (n.p., [1697], ESTC R173524), in RIA, 3 B 53–56/317.

<sup>11</sup> 'Philopater', *A Letter from a Member of the Corporation of Limerick, to his Friend, June 12th 1726* (n.p., [1726], ESTC T205381).

<sup>12</sup> *A True State of the Present Affairs of Limerick* (London, 1726, ESTC T177229).

<sup>13</sup> [Charles Massy], *A Collection of Resolutions, Queries, &c. Wrote on the Occasion of the Present Dispute in the City of Limerick* (Limerick, 1749, ESTC T992292).

<sup>14</sup> *A Letter from a Free Citizen in Limerick to his Friend in Dublin* (?Dublin, 1760, ESTC T214774).

<sup>15</sup> Robert Munter, *A Dictionary of the Print Trade in Ireland, 1550–1775* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1988), 99.

‘the addresses, songs, squibs, &c. that were published during the late contests for the knights of the shire’ in County Down.<sup>16</sup> The north-eastern county had an unusually large Protestant population of modest prosperity. A second impression of the compilation was to number 500; the size of the first is unknown.<sup>17</sup> The publication, seemingly, was directed at a relatively small section of the county electorate of 6,000.<sup>18</sup> Once more, both in its publication and through its contents, the *Collection* revealed the political vigour of the freeholders. Print had played a part in fostering and feeding this consciousness. Handbills were pasted in public places; letters and advertisements in the Belfast newspapers canvassed the merits of the individual candidates.<sup>19</sup> One partisan, eager to parade his ‘decency and good manners’, urged the contestants to read what Addison had counselled in *The Spectator* about the proper conduct of elections. In this way, the knowing and consciously polite appealed to print as a guide to—and bridle on—the potentially unruly.<sup>20</sup>

Although the Down election of 1783 paled in comparison with its successor in 1790, the latter did not spawn any known book of the transactions. Undoubtedly appeals and accounts were printed, and the Belfast newspapers updated the tallies for each candidate over the three months that the struggle lasted.<sup>21</sup> Clearer evidence of how print had been annexed to electoral campaigns in 1790 is offered by Cork, another sizeable county constituency. Candidates broadcast their credentials to about 3,000 electors.<sup>22</sup> It was said that the freeholders attached to one of the activists, Lord Kingston, could neither read nor write. Be that as it may, print was employed in order to steady or unnerve supporters.<sup>23</sup> Nearly seventy printed items occasioned by the County Cork election were gathered together and have been preserved.<sup>24</sup> They range from conventional and libellous manifestoes, through mock advertisements in which the deficiencies of aspirants and their backers are elaborated, to spurious playbills and ballads. The last were to be sung to old tunes: ‘The Quaker pot valiant’ to the air of ‘De night before Larry was stretched’; another to the melody of ‘Oh my Kitty, my deary’.<sup>25</sup> The authors,

<sup>16</sup> *Down Election. Being a Collection of the Addresses, Squibs, &c. that were Published during the late Contest for the Knights of the Shire for the County of Down* (n.p., 1783, ESTC T209956).

<sup>17</sup> MS note on the apparently unique copy in Russell Library, NUI, Maynooth, pressmark PA 344/1.

<sup>18</sup> E. M. Johnston, *Great Britain and Ireland, 1760–1800* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1963), 122, 323.

<sup>19</sup> *Down Election*, 14, 21, 33, 35, 36–7, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45–7, 63.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>21</sup> *Down Election, Downpatrick, May 1st, 1790. Hasty Sketch of the Proceedings this Day on the Hustings* (? , 1790, ESTC T202250); E. M. Johnson-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, 6 vols. (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2002), ii, 220.

<sup>22</sup> Johnston, *Great Britain and Ireland*, 322.

<sup>23</sup> *Anticipation of a Noble Lord's Address to the Voters of the Parish of Brigown; in the Barony of Condons and Clangibbons* [1790].

<sup>24</sup> They are now in the library of TCD.

<sup>25</sup> *The Patriot of* [damaged]; *The Quaker Pot Valiant; A New Song*. For one of the prototypes, see Andrew Carpenter (ed.), *Verses in English from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998), 430–3.

stimulated by the pay if not the cause, worked in assorted genres and idioms. All was in English, but with occasional attempts—usually derisive—to reproduce the cadences of the brogue. Lord Kingston's followers were alleged to trench a potato garden in Blarney Lane, the Irish quarter leading into the city, where they were 'making a new road at this shide of the shitty'.<sup>26</sup>

This material trespassed over the boundaries between song, recitation, and reading. It took up images, ideas, and tunes sometimes well known, invested them with immediacy or idiocy, and released them. Ostensibly about and for the male minority that voted in county elections, the prints, like other aspects of electioneering, suggested that the excluded might have a role. One contemporary saved the ephemera, in the same mode and perhaps for similar reasons as had George Thomason and Samuel Pepys earlier in London.<sup>27</sup> What the Cork broadsides achieved cannot be assessed. Attributes such as independence, attachment to the court, ministry or established church, sympathy for Protestant dissent, friendliness to trade, and even incipient Orangeism might usefully second or undermine the claims of candidates. Caricatures implanted images—friendly or unfriendly—that could affect perceptions of the assorted personalities: the booby from Castle Cor; the senseless bore from Castle Townsend; and Rye Court with its looby.<sup>28</sup>

Whereas such broadsides were designed to amuse, inform, and influence, the second and third intentions underlay more sustained radical critiques of the existing order. One of the most noteworthy was Paine's *Rights of Man*. Paine, inspired by the French Revolution, wrote for English not Irish conditions. Nevertheless, his ideas had an evident application to Ireland. In consequence, seven editions of the *Rights* seem to have been printed in Ireland during 1791. The first three editions totalled 10,000 copies and were quickly sold out.<sup>29</sup> The success of Paine's book encourages the view, sometimes implicit but on occasion stated explicitly, that the best stories and the most popular publications belonged to the radicals.<sup>30</sup> Without denying the importance of print in the agitated 1780s and 1790s, two points also deserve emphasis. A long tradition of employing print in Ireland for more conservative purposes did not cease. Indeed, the threats—both ideological and physical—led to redoubled efforts to counter the revolutionaries and radicals. The Association for Discountenancing Vice sought through religious exhortation and admonition to sedate the restless. It attached particular importance to the

<sup>26</sup> *Second Part of the Buck-Hunting Candidate Perplexed* (Cork, 1790).

<sup>27</sup> The signature in the album is of 'J.A. Orpin, 58 [St] Stephen's Green [Dublin]'.

<sup>28</sup> *The Patriot's Triumph. A New Song* (Cork, 1790).

<sup>29</sup> David Dickson, 'Paine and Ireland', in David Dickson, Dáire Keogh, and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *The United Irishmen: Republicanism, Radicalism and Rebellion* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993), 138.

<sup>30</sup> One strand—of republicanism—is unravelled fully in Stephen Small, *Political Thought in Ireland 1776–1798: Republicanism, Patriotism and Radicalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).



publication and distribution of ‘such small tracts as might at once amuse and entertain’. These stories, under the guise of fable, introduced the rudiments of Christian morality. By 1796, twenty-five publications had appeared, each in an initial edition of 5,000.<sup>31</sup> The Association revived strategies that reached back to the 1690s, when the societies for the reformation of manners had enlisted print in its unavailing battle against irreligion, irreverence, incendiarism, and immorality.<sup>32</sup> In the intervening decades, print runs had lengthened: from 3,000 to 5,000. The increase hardly matched the growth in Ireland’s population from perhaps 2 million to 4.4 million.<sup>33</sup>

Campaigners looked to education to convince the ignorant of gospel truths and to soothe the itch of sedition. Individual efforts were systematized when, in 1733, the King chartered the Incorporated Society for Protestant Schools. The zeal, of which the Society was both sign and stimulator, added further incentives for publishers to supply schoolbooks and edifying digests. In the longer term, the charter schools were expected to increase the numbers able to read. The society disappointed extravagant expectations, but, in conjunction with the more numerous establishments offering a rudimentary education—to girls as well as to boys—the proportion of the functionally literate rose. Towns, with better provision of schooling, and with more outlets for the literate to use their skills for business and pleasure, probably saw the greatest gains in literacy. Town dwellers were also better supplied with print, and in greater variety.

Advances in the number of readers were not universally welcomed. Pessimists feared that the newly literate would harbour notions unfitting to their lowly stations. Texts subversive of orthodoxy in religion, politics, and social organization might be read. Lampoons and broadsides teased ponderous institutions and those who manned them. Disquiet was expressed about this constant scurrility but prohibitions could not be enforced. In 1709, Archbishop King attested to the ease with which anything classified as ‘scholarly books’ was nodded through by Dublin customs officials.<sup>34</sup> More ominous was the dispersal of Jacobite works. After 1714, the satires of Dean Swift—and

<sup>31</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 48–9; William Magee, *A sermon preached before the association for discountenancing vice* (Dublin, 1796), 71–2.

<sup>32</sup> T. C. Barnard, ‘Reforming Irish Manners: The Religious Societies in Dublin during the 1690s’, *Historical Journal*, 35 (1992), 805–38; Joseph Liechty, ‘Irish Evangelicalism, Trinity College Dublin, and the Mission of the Church of Ireland at the end of the Eighteenth century’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, 1987, 292–304; Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 132–40.

<sup>33</sup> Account book, Incorporated Society, 1733–1778, TCD, MS 5419, ff. 28v, 39v, 64v; minute book, Corresponding Society, 1735–1743, s.d. 5 July 1738, 4 April 1739, 2 April 1740, 18 March 1740[1], 7 April 1742, 6 April 1743, TCD, Ms. 5302, pp. 63, 88, 109, 139v, 144v, 157a, 175; T. Barnard, ‘Children and Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, in Charles Benson and Siobhán Fitzpatrick (eds.), *That Woman—Studies in Irish Bibliography: A Festschrift for Mary ‘Paul’ Pollard* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2005), 214–38.

<sup>34</sup> Abp. W. King to H. Dodwell, 17 Aug. 1709, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. Lett. C. 29, f. 126.

other Tories—also picked up assorted dissatisfactions with the British state in Ireland. Similarly Lucas and then the pamphleteers of the 1750s appealed to and flattered the aggrieved.

The reach of such publications should not be underestimated; nor the capacity of concepts and complaints, aired at first in recondite terms, to enter into a popular culture compounded from print, song, fable, and chat. The gloomy blamed disaffected members of the ruling Protestant ascendancies, especially in the larger towns, for creating an atmosphere in which the fundamentals of church, state, and society were questioned. In this analysis, the relentless pressure from Lucas, his allies and successors, led directly to the menacing behaviour of humbler craft-workers, journeymen, and labourers. However, the extent to which the latter, often ritualized, demonstrations could be traced directly to the critiques printed in tracts and papers has yet to be shown. Traditions of protest were incubated and cherished thanks to the associational life of guilds, parishes, and neighbourhoods. In so far as they can be reconstructed, they were transmitted better through ritual and meetings than through published manifestoes. At the same time, although the evidence is elusive, guilds, such as the Weavers' in Dublin, had a tradition of using print. Between 1695 and 1696, the Dublin Weavers' Company paid for both its 'grievances' and 'case' to be printed. It returned to the same tactic in 1698. It also put into print its objections against the fees taken by a government functionary, the *alnager*. No copy of any of these is now known.<sup>35</sup> The same Company felt it worth its while to have printed various technical requirements about its members' wares and a call for them to have their weapons in readiness should the Pretender land in 1708.<sup>36</sup> These measures assumed that the majority of the brethren in the Company could read. Certainly in 1730, in a group of seventy-nine broadcloth weavers (figures of some substance in Dublin), all but sixteen were able to sign their names: often regarded as a crude guide to a functional literacy.<sup>37</sup> Other evidence about skilled craftworkers, shopkeepers, and traders in Dublin suggests levels of literacy approaching 75 or 80 per cent. Without such a widening of the potential readership, few of the developments in printed materials would be comprehensible.

Print played its part in giving greater cohesion to groups of humbler operatives, such as the often-overlooked journeymen and day labourers. Henry Nelson, described as a bricklayer, praised the laborious in mock heroic verses published in the 1720s. Maybe Nelson's lines amused superiors while

<sup>35</sup> Masters' accounts of disbursements, 1695–6, 1698, and s.d. 31 May 1703, Weavers' Company accounts, 1691–1714, Royal Society of Antiquaries, Dublin.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, accounts, 1701–2, 1711–12; s.d. 9 March 1692[3], 23 Aug. 1702, 30 March 1708.

<sup>37</sup> Agreement of broadcloth weavers, 3 Oct. 1730, NA, M 739.

they flattered the artisans.<sup>38</sup> Meanwhile, more aggressive artificers published their claims to kinder consideration from their masters.<sup>39</sup> The middling and lower orders in towns were more likely to be able to read than rural labourers. Disorder disturbed the countryside sporadically and, by the 1760s, with increased frequency. The place of print in this mobilization can only be guessed. The emblems of rural protest utilized several traditions. Some adopted and adapted pageants organized by proprietors and their agents, which reworked rituals whose origins lay before the Protestant reformation and outside Ireland. Others, portraying Queen Sive and the queen of the fairies, paraded characters embedded in local legends, and known through the repetition of such stories.<sup>40</sup> Print affected and may even have modified these shows: first as a means to coordinate and so discipline otherwise diffuse protests; then by facilitating the circulation of printed bonds and oaths.<sup>41</sup> Descriptions of the affrays published in the newspapers were intended to terrify the reader. Accounts pilfered from a lively literature of atrocity were considerably refreshed and enlarged by the revolutions in America and France. The impact of the printed testimonies differed as between those for whom it was the sole source of news and those who corresponded regularly with acquaintances in the rural hinterlands or in foreign parts. Furthermore, a newspaper read aloud in a public place differed in its effect from a silent

<sup>38</sup> H. N[elson], *A New Poem on the Ancient and Loyal Society of Journey-men Taylors*... 26 July 1725 (Dublin, 1725, ESTC T5166); idem, *The Order of the Procession of the Journey-men Builders, Plaisterers, Painters and Freemasons* (n.p., 1729, ESTC T43355); idem, *A Poem in Honour of the Antient and Loyal Society of the Journey-men-Taylors, who are to Dine at the King's Inns, on Monday the 25th inst., July*; 1726 (Dublin, [1726], ESTC T42520); idem, *A Poem in Praise of the Loyal and Charitable Society of Journey-men Taylors, who are to Dine at the King's Inns, this Present Monday the 28th of July 1729* (Dublin, [1729], ESTC T42519); idem, *Poem on the Procession of Journey-men Taylors, July the 28th, MDCCXXIX* ([Dublin, 1729], ESTC T42553); idem, *Poem on the Procession of Journey-men Smiths, on May the First, 1729* (Dublin, 1729, T196928).

<sup>39</sup> E.B., *The Defence of the Whole Society of Wool-combers of the City and Liberties of the City of Corke, upon their Turn-out* (Cork, 1722, ESTC T201361); *The Case of the Journey-men Sheermen of the City of Dublin Briefly and Impartially Stated* (n.p., n.d. [Dublin, late 1740s], in PRONI, D 562/1338).

<sup>40</sup> J. Kirby to S. Bagshawe, 2 April 1762, John Rylands Library, Manchester, B 15/1/38; T. C. Barnard, 'The Cultures of Eighteenth-Century Irish Towns', in Peter Borsay and Lindsay Proudfoot (eds.), *Provincial Towns in Early Modern England and Ireland: Change, Convergence and Divergence*, Proceedings of the British Academy, 108 (London, 2002), 205–7; J. S. Donnelly, Jr., 'The Whiteboy Movement, 1761–5', *Irish Historical Studies*, 21 (1978–9), 20–55; James Kelly (ed.), 'The Whiteboys in 1762: A Contemporary Account', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 94 (1989), 19–26; Vincent Morley, *Irish Opinion and the American Revolution, 1760–1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 49–50; Christopher O'Dwyer, 'Archbishop Butler's Visitation Book', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 34 (1976–7), 24.

<sup>41</sup> Kevin Whelan, 'The Republic in the Village: The Dissemination and Reception of Popular Literature in the 1790s', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books Beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 101–40, reprinted in Kevin Whelan, *The Tree of Liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism and the Construction of Irish Identity, 1760–1830* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), 59–96; idem, 'The United Irishmen, Enlightenment and Popular Culture', in Dickson, Keogh, and Whelan (eds.), *The United Irishmen*, 269–96.

perusal in a study or even the recital of highlights by a parent or sibling at the family table.

The administration in Dublin, unable to silence independent printers or curb unwanted imports, inspired orthodox publications. It founded journals and hired hacks to fill their columns. Those willing to write on behalf of the authorities, such as the attorney Gorges Edmond Howard in the 1750s, were reviled. Howard was scorned as ‘a mere court scribbler’.<sup>42</sup> More numerous and probably more influential were the lucubrations of Church of Ireland and other Protestant clergy. They, and their lay supporters, adumbrated political, economic, and cultural systems modelled on English or—in the case of the Presbyterians—Scottish originals. Gradually, in the course of the century, these propagandists switched from detailing how the ideal might be achieved to defending what had been achieved.

## Religious Print

The correct religious principles were valued. Accordingly much print was devoted to expounding the tenets of Christianity and explaining why Protestant, and particularly Church of Ireland readings, alone held the kernel of truth. Most measures—numbers of titles, number and size of editions—suggest that before the 1790s religious tracts outstripped secular and controversial publications. The very conservatism of this material, often traditional in format and intended to sedate not to excite, has discouraged close study. As a result, its importance to authors, printers, sellers, buyers, and readers may be in danger of being overlooked. At the core was the Bible translated into English. Long conceived as a sovereign antidote to Catholicism, by the 1690s it was also valued as a sturdy shield against deism and irreligion. Abridgements, extracts, manuals, and guides were shipped into Dublin. Cheap editions were underwritten by the philanthropic. Efforts were renewed to print handy versions locally.<sup>43</sup> Around the Scriptures grew increasingly dense thickets of commentary and exposition. At first little was generated within Protestant Ireland, but by the end of the seventeenth century more was being written by those on the Irish mission. Much of the writing had a covert and, on occasion, an overt anti-Catholic thrust. Favoured genres included testimony by converts from Catholicism. Public recantations were periodically published. They were interspersed with more elaborate

<sup>42</sup> G. E. Howard, *The Miscellaneous Works, in Verse and Prose*, 3 vols. (Dublin, 1782, ESTC T86141), i. pp. xxxiii–xxxix.

<sup>43</sup> M. Moxon to George I, 9 June 1717, PRO, SP63/357/115; S. Mandelbrote, ‘John Baskett, the Dublin Booksellers, and the Printing of the Bible, 1710–1724’, in A. Hunt, G. Mandelbrote, and A. Sheil (eds.), *The Book Trade and its Customers* (Winchester: St Paul’s Bibliographies, 1997), 115–31.

treatises. Antonio Gavin, a graduate of the University of Saragosa, abandoned Spain and the Catholic church, and ended in Cork city. He was encouraged by zealots active in the causes of educational and intellectual improvement to share his insider's knowledge of the erroneous doctrines. The result was Gavin's *A Master key to popery*, published in 1724.<sup>44</sup> Fresh tracts tried repeatedly to warn the innocent and ignorant of the snares around them; old favourites were re-issued. Some behind the encouragement of Gavin were also keen to have a collection of cases against popery, issued originally in the England of James II, published in Dublin, where (it was argued) the documentation would still be helpful.<sup>45</sup> As late as 1757, Gavin's *Master key* was still felt useful by Protestants around Sligo, who feared Catholic wiles.<sup>46</sup>

What was produced for and distributed by charitable Protestants aimed primarily to defend against dangerous doctrines and vicious behaviour. The fragile pamphlets, despite being distributed in large quantities, survive sparsely, if at all. Repeated readings, or merely bad usage, conventionally account for why they perished. The need to line patty pans, to make tapers and curling papers, or a new niceness over bodily functions equally well explain the low rates of survival. Chapbooks, with their fabulous tales, suffered the same fate. In their case, it is assumed that popularity caused them to fall apart. Popularity is less often advanced as the reason why relatively few religious tracts have survived. After 1733, the Incorporated Society for Protestant schools distributed them to the poor and vulnerable. The printed salves, often issued in conjunction with the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in England, were small in format and cheap in price. The simplest sold for one penny, catechisms for 3d, and solid sermons at six pence. Incumbents, parishioners, and the benevolent could buy these nutriments in multiples at discounted prices, and would then hand them to children, servants, and apprentices.<sup>47</sup> Protestants in Ireland, keen to stress that theirs was a religion of the word, insisted that it should be printed as well as preached. Rivals of the Church of Ireland did not neglect the provision of print. The Scottish Presbyterians, strong in Ulster but active elsewhere, and the Quakers attended assiduously to this matter. However, the Society of Friends still availed itself of scribal publication.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Dublin, 1724.

<sup>45</sup> Barnard, 'Children and Books in Eighteenth-century Ireland', and sources at n. 40.

<sup>46</sup> Order book, Primrose Grange, 1757–1790, s.d. 20 July 1757, TCD, MS 5646; Board book, Incorporated Society, 1761–1775, s.d. 5 Feb. 1766, TCD, MS 5225, f. 90.

<sup>47</sup> 'Catalogue of Charity Pamphlets as they are Sold Single or by the Hundred by S. Hyde', in [N. Bernard], *The Whole Proceedings of the Siege of Drogheda* (Dublin, 1736, ESTC T217465).

<sup>48</sup> Lurgan Society of Friends meeting minutes, ff. 2v, 10v, 12v, 19v, 24v, 31v, 32v, 33v, 34v, 37v, 38v, 39v, 50v, 51v, 54v, 58v, 62, 62v, 65v, 67, 70v, PRONI, T 1062/41; A. Drennan, 'On the Identification of the First Belfast Printed Book', *The Library*, 7th series, 1 (2000), 193–5; Wesley McCann, 'Patrick Neill and the Origins of Belfast Printing', in Peter Isaac (ed.), *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), 126–37.

Adherents of the Church of Ireland, although often anxious to combat the Protestant dissenters through print, contrasted themselves most sharply with the Catholics. Not altogether consistently, Protestants contended that the Catholics had little time for the Scriptures, whether expounded from the pulpit or read at home, yet put legal obstacles in the path of Catholic print. In the later seventeenth century, when few presses operated in Ireland, they were easily wrested from Catholics. As a consequence, Catholics looked abroad for their devotional aids. Here, too, the authorities acted. However, although they might impede they could not stop works printed on the Continent—or even in Britain—from entering Ireland. By the eighteenth century, more relaxed attitudes and commercial imperatives ensured that some authors and publishers within Ireland catered to the potentially lucrative market of the Catholic majority. Indeed, some specialized in this readership.<sup>49</sup> Even so, its full potential was difficult to gauge or to exploit. The dispossessed Irish Catholics greatly outnumbered the Protestants, but many were doomed to illiteracy. In addition, the meagre earnings of most left little money for the consolations of print. Then, too, language inhibited book-buying. Among Catholics, monoglot Irish-speakers and those bilingual in Irish and English constituted a majority.<sup>50</sup> In 1740, a poet postulated a venerable Catholic family, stripped of its estates in the seventeenth century, whose offspring read Irish and spoke Latin.<sup>51</sup> Such a situation, if not a complete romance, seems to have been rare. Since few were trained to read printed Irish, works in the medium were seldom published throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>52</sup> Irish writings generally circulated in handwritten versions.<sup>53</sup> As a

<sup>49</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 47; Hugh Fenning, 'Cork Imprints of Catholic Interest, 1723–1804', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 100 (1995), 129–48; idem, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–39', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 39 and 40 (1997–8), 106–54; idem, 'Prayerbooks and Pamphlets, 1700–1829', *Seanchas Ard Mharcha*, 16 (1994), 93–9; idem, 'The Catholic Press in Munster in the Eighteenth century', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 19–27; Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 30–1, 73–5, 308; Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000), 92–3, 174, 632–4.

<sup>50</sup> Graeme Kirkham, 'Literacy in North-West Ulster, 1680–1860', in Mary Daly and David Dickson (eds.), *The Origins of Popular Literacy in Ireland: Language Change and Educational Development 1700–1920* (Dublin: Department of Modern History, Trinity College Dublin, and Department of Irish History, University College Dublin, 1990), 73–96; Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850*, 154–68. Further evidence is offered in Toby Barnard, 'Introduction', in Toby Barnard and Brigid McCormack (eds.), *Dublin Tholsel Court Records*, forthcoming.

<sup>51</sup> L. Whyte, *Poems on Various Subjects, Serious and Diverting* (Dublin, 1740), 70. Cf. J. D. White, 'Extracts from Original Wills Formerly Preserved in the Consistorial Office, Cashel', *Journal of Kilkenny and South East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, new series, ii (1858–9), 317–22.

<sup>52</sup> T. C. Barnard, 'Protestants and the Irish Language, c. 1675–1725', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44 (1993), 243–72, reprinted in idem, *Irish Protestant Ascents and Descents, 1641–1770* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 179–207.

<sup>53</sup> L. M. Cullen, 'Patrons, Teachers and Literacy in Irish, 1700–1850', in Daly and Dickson (eds.), *The Origins of Popular Literacy in Ireland*, 15–44; Niall Ó Ciosáin, 'Printed Popular Literature in Irish, 1750–1850: Presence and Absence', *ibid.*, 45–58; O'Dwyer, 'Archbishop Butler's Visitation Book',

consequence, printed works in Latin and French, and probably even Greek, German, and Italian, were more numerous in the island.<sup>54</sup>

Evangelical ventures made tracts available to needy (but deserving) Protestants, but rarely to committed Catholics. What charities, if any, provided Catholics with devotional help are unclear. Prosperous Catholics were scarce in comparison with their Protestant neighbours, and rarely owned large libraries. Occasional examples of lay owners of Bibles, missals, and breviaries do little to penetrate how print featured in Catholic lives.<sup>55</sup> Potentially, Irish Catholics when educated overseas acquired facility in Latin and modern European languages, which then gave access to a written and printed culture richer than that of Protestant Ireland.<sup>56</sup> Within Catholic communities, no less than in Protestant ones, clerics led. They wrote and owned many of the recorded books; they tried to dictate what others should or should not read (and write).<sup>57</sup>

Stories from the Bible, when told compellingly and vividly, delighted, terrified, and soothed. Few secular romances equalled tales such as that of the Prodigal Son, reprised through a variant of print in numerous engravings and—before the end of the century—even on decorated teapots.<sup>58</sup> The censorious, faced with the feverish craving among the populace for novelties in print as well as in dress, diet, and furnishings, warned against surrendering to such impulses. They offered the alternatives of cheap and condensed Bibles, prayer books, and sermons. Even then, professional users of print, notably the ordained clergy, were not always sure that amateurs among the laity could be left to graze these luscious pastures without strict guidance. The Bible, susceptible to many readings, provided numerous examples that confounded the current wisdom in church and state, and precedents for

(1976–7), 10, 24, 34, 40; Fergus Ó Fearghail, ‘The Catholic Church in County Kilkenny, 1600–1800’, in William Nolan and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *Kilkenny: History and Society* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1990), 239–40.

<sup>54</sup> H. Cavendish to R. Wilmot, 23 April 1748, PRONI, T 3019/1011; W. P. Lunnell, memoirs, NLI, MS 21,521; Hugh Fenning, ‘The Library of Bishop William Daton of Ossory, 1698’, *Collectanea Hibernica*, 20 (1998), 31; Máire Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford, 2001).

<sup>55</sup> W. P. Burke, *History of Clonmel* (Waterford, 1907), 330; O’Dwyer, ‘Archbishop Butler’s visitation Book’, 51; 34 (1976–7), 10, 24, 34, 40.

<sup>56</sup> Brian de Breffny, ‘Letters from Connaught to a Wild Goose’, *The Irish Ancestor*, 2 (1978), 95–9; Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 172–82.

<sup>57</sup> William Carrigan, ‘Catholic Episcopal Wills’, *Archivium Hibernicum*, 4 (1915), 68, 87, 89; R. L. Cole, ‘Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *Library Quarterly*, 44 (1974), 234–6; Hugh Fenning, ‘The Library of a Preacher of Drogheda: John Donnelly, O.P. (d. 1748)’, *Collectanea Hibernica*, 18 and 19 (1977), 72–104; P. Ó Suilleabháin, ‘The Library of a Parish Priest of the Penal Days’, *Collectanea Hibernica*, 6 and 7 (1963–4), 234–44.

<sup>58</sup> Peter Francis, ‘Irish Creamware: The Downshire Pottery in Belfast’, *Transactions of the English Ceramic Circle*, 15 (1995), 400–25; P. Walton, *Creamware and Other English Pottery at Temple Newsam House, Leeds* (Bradford and London, 1976), 233–4; C. Williams-Wood, *English Transfer-Printed Pottery and Porcelain* (London, 1981), 172, and plates 97 and 98.

successful challenges to ungodly orders.<sup>59</sup> The unfailing appeal of sacred histories encouraged shrewd authors and publishers to mint afresh the familiar currency. In Ulster, it has been shown how Thomas Stackhouse's *History of the New Testament*, issued in parts at Belfast in 1750, attracted readers and made money for the several undertakers.<sup>60</sup>

## Popular Print

In the 1790s, to counter the damage arising from picaresque and subversive stories, methods tried earlier by the devout of the Incorporated Society and allied institutions were updated. The moralizing stories of Hannah More were imported from England, into Ireland, where they enjoyed a comparable success. However, her 'penny godlinesses' hardly stifled demand for the secular and sensational.<sup>61</sup> In particular, chapbooks, again introduced from England into Ireland, offered escapism. Chivalric exemplars, like Guy of Warwick or St George of England as portrayed in the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, even when they personified the rise of the obscure might seem remote from the concerns of the humble reader in Ireland. By the 1730s, there were indications of compilations aimed more specifically at Irish audiences, now large enough to be worth cultivating. Prominent among the titles were criminal biographies: of James Freney, a highwayman who had electrified districts around Kilkenny in the mid-century, and Redmond O'Hanlon, uprooted from his lands in Ulster in the time of Charles II. Both characters, especially in their literary treatment, personified the ambiguous feelings towards law-breakers. Freney, after a career of banditry, repented, and his repentance endeared him to well-connected patrons. The reformed malefactor was rewarded with an office in the provincial revenue service. Nevertheless, while Freney in the end benefited from and indeed joined the official state of British Ireland, he was associated, at least in fiction, with the traditions of popular culture. Freney robbed the rich and gave to the poor. Violence was glorified as a necessary attribute of the gentleman.<sup>62</sup> O'Hanlon, a more distant historical figure, was unequivocally a victim of the legal

<sup>59</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 10–38; James Raven, 'From Promotion to Proscription: Arrangements for Reading and Eighteenth-Century Libraries', in James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor (eds.), *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 175–201.

<sup>60</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 26–7.

<sup>61</sup> Antonia McManus, *The Irish Hedge School and its Books, 1695–1831* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 144–5, 160–4; Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, 138–9.

<sup>62</sup> *The Life and Adventures of James Freney*, ed. F. McEvoy (Kilkenny, 1988).



expropriations of the seventeenth century. In print, he personified heroic resistance to the rapacious newcomers, especially in the borderlands of Ulster. These idealizations of Freney and O'Hanlon were regarded askance by the authorities, who feared values rather different from those beloved of the English and Protestant authorities might be popularized.<sup>63</sup> A more compendious account of Irish highwaymen excited similar worries.<sup>64</sup>

This material, ostensibly secular in its orientation and potentially critical of the ideals and structures of the incumbent regime, was at first tailored to suit the cultivated. By the close of the eighteenth century, it has been suggested, it fell from favour among the respectable. The reasons for the cooling of enthusiasm included the ever-increasing diversification of the worlds of print from which the prosperous could pick. It may also reveal a divergence, more belated in Ireland than in some areas of western Europe, of popular from learned tastes—in reading as in much else. In Ireland, anxieties about the implications of lawlessness grew with the incidence of rural and urban protest, culminating in the bloodletting of the 1790s. No longer was it safe to romanticize about those who looked to be, and were sometimes venerated as, the ancestors of late-eighteenth-century protestors. These apparently lowly types of printed romances were aimed at anglophone readers, although as they were read aloud, embellished, and amplified, they could reach the bilingual and illiterate. Nor is it always clear, even as the tide of terror rose around them, that all the consciously polite shunned fiction about buccaneers and freebooters. Despite differences in confessional and cultural formation, what laypeople read for pleasure in eighteenth-century Ireland was determined chiefly by finances and the availability of texts. The inhabitants of Dublin and the populous seaports enjoyed a better choice than did their country cousins.

The sensational and often sympathetic publications shaded into the gallows' speeches, which proved a popular genre of broadside publishing in eighteenth-century Ireland, no less than in other countries. In practice, most biographies, although they contained titillation and amusement, were designed to chill. Readers were warned of the consequences of bad company, drinking, idleness, extravagance, pride, and vice. Familiar tropes were apprentices who wilfully abandoned their indentures, provincials ensnared by Dublin, Protestants who lapsed from their faith, and disbanded soldiers who failed to adjust to civilian life. From the mouths of most who swung from the gallows of Dublin poured remorse and repentance. Like much of the material directed at supposedly simple readers, the last words of criminals were capable

<sup>63</sup> For the context: Raymond Gillespie, 'The Transformation of the Borderlands, 1600–1700', in Raymond Gillespie and Harold O'Sullivan (eds.), *The Borderlands: Essays on the History of the Ulster-Leinster Border* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1989), 86–7; T. W. Moody, 'Redmond O'Hanlon', *Proceedings of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society*, 2nd series, 1 (1937), 7–33.

<sup>64</sup> Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, 87–99.

of contradictory readings. Diversion, terror, sanctimonious self-congratulation were all possible responses. Protestant miscreants were disproportionately well represented. This imbalance may reflect no more than the better documentation of the lives of the minority confession. However, it could also suggest a shrewd commercial calculation, with Protestants more likely than Catholics to be able to read and so muse on the implications of the testimonies. Thanks to their format, low price, and vivid style, they exerted a strong appeal until they succumbed—late in the eighteenth century—to a more general decline in the popularity of the broadside and the new attractions of newspaper reporting of trials.<sup>65</sup>

## The World of the Newspaper

Newspapers attest to the way in which print was pervading life in eighteenth-century Ireland. In common with, and sometimes in advance of other kinds of printing, after the 1690s they spread from the capital into the provinces. By the mid-eighteenth century, they catered to localities such as Cork, Limerick, Belfast, and Derry. As much by the advertisements that they carried as in the news that they purveyed, they suggested the lengthening reach of print. They were a way of keeping in touch, not just with happenings in Ireland, but in Britain and the continent of Europe. Indeed much of what they contained was filched from British journals. These features may have strengthened the sense in some readers of belonging to a Britannic or anglophone community not confined to Ireland. However, local distinctiveness and distinctions could be accentuated. By the 1740s, Protestants were said to read Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, while Catholics favoured *Pue's Occurrences*.<sup>66</sup> One Protestant squire contentedly subscribed to both.<sup>67</sup> Members of the Protestant ascendancy valued their newspapers and complained when the supply was threatened. Yet, a voter in the parliamentary election for County Clare in 1745, Henry Cooper, who lived in Dublin, was quizzed as to whether he read the *Dublin Journal*. The poll had been advertised there. Cooper answered that he might spend a month in Dublin, 'without reading the news and seldom reads the news so far as the advertisements'.<sup>68</sup> The expectation was that a man of Cooper's standing, a freeholder qualified for citizenship, might reasonably be assumed to read the papers. By not doing so, it seemed that he had missed crucial information about the Clare election. The circulation of print of political import is

<sup>65</sup> James Kelly, *Gallows Speeches from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 24, 34–7.

<sup>66</sup> R. Edwards to F. Price, 4 Aug. 1745, NLW, Puleston MS 3577E/28.

<sup>67</sup> R. Edgeworth, accounts, s.d. 27 March 1742, 17 Feb. 1742[3], 11 Aug. 1743, 15 Aug. 1749, NLI, MSS 1515, pp. 105, 203; 1516, p. 61; 1518, p. 171.

<sup>68</sup> Co. Clare pollbook, 1745, TCD, MS 2059, f. 27v.

assumed in a suppositious letter from an inhabitant of Ballyjamesduff in 1749. The excitement generated by Lucas's challenge to the civic oligarchy in Dublin reverberated through the provinces, communicated in part through printed papers. In the Cavan town, a group assembled in a tavern after divine service on a Sunday. The company consisted of the respectable from the middling orders: the curate, an excise-man, apothecary, the squire's steward, and the landlord of the inn. They read Lucas's journal, *The Censor*, and then argued over its contents.<sup>69</sup>

Single issues of journals were to be had for a penny, bringing them within the ambit of the modest. In County Limerick during the 1740s, an agent on a limited budget bought occasional newspapers when he happened to be in the city of Limerick or important events were happening. Members of the gentry, in contrast, subscribed on a six-monthly or annual basis.<sup>70</sup> For subscribers in the countryside, an investment of 11s 4½d for six months or £1 2s 9d for the entire year was needed: equivalent to perhaps 20 per cent of a labourer's annual wages.<sup>71</sup> Having papers sent regularly from London was considerably more expensive: a year's supply for Lismore in County Waterford in the 1720s cost three guineas.<sup>72</sup> However, it was not necessary oneself to pay an annual subscription to read or hear the news at least intermittently. In 1734, it was alleged that one Dublin paper had 200 subscribers, and sold 400 copies. Other titles in the capital may have sold 1,800 to 2,000 copies of each number. By the 1770s, weekly sales of all titles averaged approximately 45,000.<sup>73</sup> In 1794, *The Belfast Newsletter* revealed a print run that ranged between 2,975 and 3,225 copies. *The Northern Star* in the same town claimed to print an average of 4,000 copies a few years later.<sup>74</sup> In the context of Belfast and its hinterland of the prospering and aspiring, this circulation impressed rather than startled. However, remembering the communal and convivial settings in which newspapers were often scanned, a single copy might inform many more than its original purchaser.<sup>75</sup>

Another sign of the impact of newspapers was in their advertisements. Not just aspiring members of Parliament and demagogues, but wholesalers and retailers realized early in the eighteenth century that their wares would find

<sup>69</sup> *A Letter from Patrick Taylor, of Bally-James-Duff.*

<sup>70</sup> N. Peacock, journal, s.d. 18 May 1744, 7 Aug. 1744, 19 July 1745, 23 and 26 Oct. 1745, 6 April 1747, NLI, MS 16091.

<sup>71</sup> R. Edgeworth, accounts, s.d. 17 Feb. 1742[3], 11 Aug. 1743, 15 Aug. 1749, NLI, MSS 1515, p. 203; 1516, p. 61; 1518, p. 171; Robert Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper, 1685–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 63.

<sup>72</sup> A. Crotty, account book, 1726–1732, pp. 81, 100, 114, Chatsworth House, Derbyshire.

<sup>73</sup> Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper*, 85–8.

<sup>74</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 35–6; Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 8.

<sup>75</sup> R. Chartier, 'Leisure and Sociability: Reading Aloud in Early Modern Europe', in S. Zimmerman and R. F. E. Weissman (eds.), *Urban Life in the Renaissance* (Newark, London, and Toronto, 1989), 103–20.

the largest market through the press. For readers, especially those distant from Dublin, needs were not only satisfied but created or stimulated by the printed descriptions. From County Roscommon, the Bishop of Elphin, Edward Synge pestered his daughter, still in Dublin, about items that he had seen advertised in the press.<sup>76</sup> Bit by bit, the advertisements made more use of visual images and distinctive typography, as did bill-heads and handbills of Dublin retailers. Yet, the majority of commercial notices in the newspapers baldly listed commodities. Many—patent medicines, bizarre ironmongery, or exotic fabrics—had strange and sometimes arresting names. The richer assortment of goods led to an expanded vocabulary of description. Both to master it and to match the terms to articles seen and desired were not easy. It introduced into more mundane spheres the craze of the learned for classification. The natural world abounded with flora and fauna, each species and subspecies with its own name to be learnt. So, too, did the vibrant world of manufactured goods. Sometimes, the reader as a would-be shopper, remote from the object, struggled to match the term to the article.<sup>77</sup>

## The Role of Print

Despite copious information about the proliferation of cheap print by the end of the eighteenth century, it is difficult to move behind the stated intentions of the authors, sponsors, and publishers, to assess how readers received it. Few autobiographies chart the first entry of the humble in eighteenth-century Ireland onto the perils and pleasures of print.<sup>78</sup> The warning that chapbooks may have been literature *for* rather than *of* the people needs to be heeded in the Irish as much as in the North American context.<sup>79</sup> Rare, but not unknown, are comments by learned owners on what they were reading. The humble stay stubbornly silent.

English rulers hoped to bring Ireland to peace, Protestantism, and English ways through print. The campaign might falter but was never terminated. However, by the early eighteenth century much of the work was delegated to

<sup>76</sup> M. L. Legg (ed.), *The Synge Letters: Bishop Edward Synge to his Daughter Alicia, Roscommon to Dublin, 1746–1752* (Dublin, 1996), 14, 186, 264, 461.

<sup>77</sup> T. C. Barnard, 'Integration or Separation? Hospitality and Display in Protestant Ireland, c. 1660–1800', in L. Brockliss and D. Eastwood (eds.), *A Union of Multiple Identities: The British Isles, c. 1750–1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 127–46. For one aspect: J. Greene and E. McCrum, '“Small Clothes”: The Evolution of Men's Nether Garments as Evidenced in *The Belfast Newsletter* Index 1737–1800', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 5 (1990), 153–72.

<sup>78</sup> W. P. Lunnell, autobiography, NLI, MS. 21,521; James Trail, autobiography, PRONI, D 1460/1.

<sup>79</sup> David D. Hall, 'The Uses of Literacy in New England, 1600–1850', in W. L. Joyce, D. D. Hall, R. D. Brown, and J. B. Hench (eds.), *Printing and Society in Early America* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society 1983), 13–14.

bodies other than the Dublin government. It fell to the state church, the Incorporated Society, and Dublin Society to organize publications calculated for spiritual and material betterment. The resulting miscellany on Christian and polite deportment, gardening, tree-planting, flax-growing, and linen manufacture had obvious applications to Irish needs. However, many tracts reeked of the study rather than of toiling at the tasks. From the 1730s, the Dublin Society expressed Protestant concern for the imagined backwardness and ignorance of Ireland as did the Incorporated Society. The former not only published its proceedings, but strove to ‘bring practical and useful knowledge from the retirements of libraries and closets into public view’. It financed reprints of tracts, usually issued first in London, in expectation of ‘conveying knowledge to the poor, at a very easy rate; and to the indolent and busy readers in small parcels’. Nevertheless, its guides to the cultivation of broccoli, flax, and silk probably appealed to the reflective landowner rather than, as was hoped, to ‘the poorer sort, the husbandman and manufacturer’.<sup>80</sup>

The bait of profit gradually persuaded intrepid undertakers to move beyond compendious almanacs into manuals on medicine, farriery, gardening, architecture, tree-planting, canal-building, and textile making. There was money, too, to be made from pious papists, or from stocking what women or children preferred. Catholic women, if affluent (a less common situation than among their Protestant contemporaries), collected books.<sup>81</sup> Men looked with alarm at the ways in which female tastes sustained authors and publishers, and decried the craze for novels, seen primarily as women’s reading. How free women, other than widows, were to choose their own or their household’s books is another puzzle.<sup>82</sup> One Dublin lady is found in the 1750s acquiring holy tracts, probably for the edification of servants and children. Another is glimpsed enrapt by a novel by Samuel Richardson, so much so that she imagined herself as a character from *Sir Charles Grandison*.<sup>83</sup> Circulating libraries may have flourished thanks to the eagerness of women to read the fashionable. On the other hand, the isolated ‘public’ libraries and reading clubs seem to have been overwhelmingly male preserves. ‘Gentlewomen’ appeared among the prosperous few who borrowed books from the Armagh Public Library between 1796 and 1802. In general, print may have done more to solidify male stereotypes of proper female behaviour

<sup>80</sup> *The Dublin Society’s Weekly Observations* (Dublin, 1739), 7–8; Royal Dublin Society, *A Bibliography of the Publications of the Royal Dublin Society from its Foundation in the Year 1731*, 2nd edn. (Dublin, 1953).

<sup>81</sup> Burke, *History of Clonmel*, 330.

<sup>82</sup> Máire Kennedy, ‘Women and Reading in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, in Cunningham and Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading*, 78–98.

<sup>83</sup> C. Bagshawe to S. Bagshawe, 23 Sep. 1755, John Rylands Library, Manchester, B 3/1/25; H. F. Berry (ed.), ‘Notes from the Diary of a Dublin Lady in the Reign of George II’, *JRSAL*, 5th series, 8 (1898), 143–4; Maria Luddy (ed.), *Diary of Mary Mathew* (Thurles, 1991), 1.

than to allow eighteenth-century Irish women to express their distinctive concerns.<sup>84</sup>

Another innovation was to cater specifically for children's wants. Often what was on sale told more of the obsessions of educational pundits and the aspirations of doting parents than of the likes and dislikes of the children themselves. One parent in Dublin reported that a daughter was reading *Don Quixote*, adding, 'who I hope will make her despise the whole tribe of romance writers'.<sup>85</sup> In the 1790s, John Dunn, a Dublin printer with a markedly Catholic clientele, advertised thirteen of his titles as 'pretty books for good children'. A copy of one, *A select collection of the most useful tables in arithmetic: for young ladies and gentlemen*, in a miniature format has survived. It is a work of professed utility: mathematical tables with additions to assist in purchasing meat at markets. Servants, apprentices, even novice householders were as likely as children to learn from the handbook. However, the publication touts a dozen others. They include *Cock Robin*, *Christmas Rhymes*, *Goody Two-Shoes*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Hobby-Horse*, and *Tom Thumb*. None is known in an extant copy. The books were cheap: at most two pence; more at a half-penny. Thus, this juvenilia was within the reach of those who bought the occasional almanac, newspaper, or broadsheet. In price the items compared directly with the cheaper religious tracts advertised, for example, by Sarah Hyde in the 1730s and with the radical materials circulated in the turbulent 1790s.<sup>86</sup>

More numerous schools may have increased the proportion of the literate, particularly in the towns; they also fuelled demand for print. By the eighteenth century, it was being satisfied by Dublin printers and publishers, and not just by booksellers who imported schoolbooks. Primers, grammars, dictionaries, manuals on calligraphy, mathematics, navigation, and bookkeeping met needs. Youths destined for Dublin University, the lettered professions of the law, medicine, and church, and state service required further texts. Many of the best-documented collections formed in later seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland belonged to figures from these groups. However, the obsessive collector, tracking rarities through correspondence, unofficial agents, and the catalogues of foreign dealers, must be distinguished from the cleric, physician, or lawyer who had a modest selection for professional duties. The absence of accessible libraries in which trainees might study obliged them to buy their own books. Indeed, the want of public libraries powered the drive, first by Archbishop Marsh in Dublin during the first

<sup>84</sup> Cole, 'Community Lending Libraries', 119–20; J. E. Hunter, 'The Eighteenth-Century Englishwoman According to *The Gentleman's Magazine*', in P. Fritz and R. Morton (eds.), *Women in the Eighteenth Century and Other Essays* (Toronto, 1976).

<sup>85</sup> W. Montgomery to D. Graeme, 6 Aug. 1765, National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh, GD 190/3/319, 39.

<sup>86</sup> 'Catalogue', in [Bernard], *The Whole Proceedings of the Siege of Drogheda*.

decade of the century and then by other prelates in the provinces, to endow such institutions.

Diocesan, parochial, and public libraries remained few, scattered, and idiosyncratic in their holdings. In time, some gaps would be filled by commercial circulating libraries. The latter flourished in the larger towns: first, Dublin, but soon Cork, Galway, Belfast, Newry, and Strabane.<sup>87</sup> At Cork, Thomas Lord charged an annual 17s 4d to subscribers, but in the same city, John Connor required only 14s. By 1784, Thomas Jackson in Dublin asked an annual subscription of 16s 3d: this was the standard fee in the capital. In 1775, the Belfast Circulating Library demanded yearly a more modest 13s. Since the subscription libraries solicited the custom of visitors to the cities, the proprietors offered weekly, monthly, and quarterly terms. They were also prepared to accommodate the curious seeking only a single volume.<sup>88</sup> In 1755, Richard Edgeworth, up from the Irish midlands for a season, paid to borrow books from James Hoey's bookshop in Dublin. The enterprising Hoey had first advertised the loan of romances and novels twenty years earlier.<sup>89</sup> A yearly subscription cost much the same as a newspaper sent into the countryside for a year, and, like the newspapers, hardly taxed the wealthy squire with an income of £1,200 to £2,000 p.a. For the generality, lucky to earn £5 to £10 yearly, it was an unthinkable extravagance. In comparison not just with London, but also colonial North America, the commercial library was slow to arrive in Ireland. In total, the number of establishments compared with that in Scotland.<sup>90</sup>

In default, the interested found alternative means to books and journals. The discarded, stolen, and second-hand were easily had.<sup>91</sup> Bequests sometimes brought print, as other prestigious objects, into seemingly humble homes. Late in the eighteenth century, the polite and self-improvers established reading societies. Eleven have been counted. Some pandered to the craze for novels; others concentrated on more austere material. The authorities suspected that these circles might mutate into cells of subversives.<sup>92</sup> The benevolent

<sup>87</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 37–8; Joanna Finnegan, 'Georgian Drogheda and the Printed Word', in Long (ed.), *Books Beyond the Pale*, 41; Vincent Kinane, 'The Early Book Trade in Galway', *ibid.*, 61, 67.

<sup>88</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 38; Cole, 'Community Lending Libraries', 111–22; P. Kaufman, 'Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales', reprinted in his *Libraries and Their Users* (London, 1969), 172–9; K. A. Manley, 'Booksellers, Peruke-Makers and Rabbit Merchants: The Growth of Circulating Libraries in the Eighteenth Century', in Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote (eds.), *Libraries and the Book Trade* (Newcastle, Del., 2000), 40.

<sup>89</sup> R. Edgeworth, account books, s.d. 13 Oct. 1755, NLI, MS 1522, p. 51; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 292.

<sup>90</sup> R. W. Beales and J. N. Green, 'Libraries and Their Users', in Hugh Amory and David Hall (eds.), *A History of the Book in America I: The Colonial Book in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 402.

<sup>91</sup> For thefts of books in Dublin during the 1740s see NA, Crown entry books, city and county of Dublin.

<sup>92</sup> Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, 38–40; Cole, 'Community Lending Libraries', 21–2.

continued to subsidize the publication of titles dedicated to ethical and material betterment. However, as has been stressed, we are left to speculate about their impact. To the consciously bookish whose correspondence is interlarded with gossip about purchases and reading, Nicholas Peacock provides a small corrective. As a modest agent to landowners in County Limerick he is located lower in the social and economic hierarchies than those whose reading habits can be reconstructed in any helpful detail. He noted his reading. Indeed, the act of writing a diary, albeit a terse one, showed his awareness of literary models. Thanks to proximity to the city of Limerick, he was able to go to its shops for print as for other supplies.<sup>93</sup> Single issues of newspapers for one penny and almanacs were mixed with exotic tales. Sometimes Peacock bought for his employers.<sup>94</sup> In turn, they may have shared the contents of their bookshelves with him.

Some of Peacock's reading was evidently utilitarian, but it did not always equip him to grapple with the Hanoverian state. More intrusive government generated formal procedures expressed in printed instruments such as leases, indentures, and receipts. The ability to understand them became a prerequisite to navigate the bureaucratic creeks and reefs. Peacock used his literate skills in the running of the local Church of Ireland vestry. However, he was baffled when he solicited the trustees of the Linen Board, an official body, for help to plant flax and make linen, it 'being a new thing'. He sought instruction from a more confident neighbour.<sup>95</sup> At the same time, Peacock read for pleasure. As a bachelor with a small household of Catholic and presumably Irish-speaking servants, reading was a solitary activity. Furthermore, it differentiated him from those around him, who lacked the leisure, funds and—most importantly—the skills. The time passed in reading by those in the middling ranks may have varied with the seasons. Winter weather disabled the likes of Peacock from agricultural tasks and even outdoor diversions, leaving him to his books indoors. The costs of candles could restrict reading during hours of darkness. Peacock, once married, and then a father, noted fewer occasions when he read. His record is silent about books bought for his sons, and—sadly—does not disclose whether he read items aloud to his wife and children.<sup>96</sup>

This silence is of a piece with a record with too many missing details and others barely legible. The Dublin book trade has been brilliantly illumined; publications recovered, listed, and even quantified; libraries and auctions have been analysed. Also, scribal and provincial activity is coming into sharper focus. This chapter has mentioned categories of readers—among the

<sup>93</sup> Munter, *Dictionary of the Print Trade in Ireland*, 290–1; idem, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 137; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 601. <sup>94</sup> N. Peacock, journal, s.d. 25 April 1744, 6 April 1747, NLI, MS 16091.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., s.d. 17 and 29 March 1741, 26, 27, and 28 April 1741, 4 June 1741, 5 Feb. 1741[2].

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., s.d. 6 March 1747[8], 12 Feb. 1748[9], 1 Oct. 1749, 10 and 17 Dec. 1749, 1 April 1750.



middling sort and poor, Catholics, women and children—whose interests were considered by publishers and who may have been bewitched by print. Alas, this cannot recapture, but only guess, how imaginations leapt on first reading of the captivity of the Jews, the sufferings of Jesus Christ, the exploits of the Milesians, Chinese habits, or indeed of the ‘massacres’ of 1641 and the battle of Aughrim.

## II

# THE STRUCTURE OF PRINT

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# The Print Trade, 1550–1700

*Colm Lennon*

Not until a century after the successful experiments of Johan Gutenberg with moveable metallic type at Mainz did printing find a domicile in Ireland. Even with the setting up by Humphrey Powell of the first press at Dublin in 1551 a real print trade was extremely slow to evolve. This languid rate of development may have been due to a paucity of relatively large centres of population in the country before the seventeenth century. Yet, many smaller European towns on a par demographically with the more substantial Irish cities were homes to presses before 1550.<sup>1</sup> More significantly, perhaps, the lack of hubs of patronage in the form of a court or a university may have depressed demand for printed works, discouraging entrepreneurs from committing themselves to the costly venture of printing. By comparison with most contemporary European countries that produced native printing presses there were few sources of public or private wealth in Ireland to provide the large capital investment needed to found and sustain a printing industry. Such resources were normally associated with seats of princely power (such as Mainz), cosmopolitan centres with flourishing cultural milieux, or major commercial centres such as Venice and Antwerp.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the thrust of government reform policies from the mid-sixteenth century in Ireland proved to be highly restrictive of publishing outside of official channels.

In attempting to chart the slow growth of an indigenous Irish printing industry, this study takes account of the extent to which political, social, and economic conditions in Ireland differed from those in contemporary lands. Yet the history of most of the first century and a half of Irish printing is itself a reflection of the transformation of these conditions under the auspices of state policy. The nature of the earliest, very limited printing projects in English and Irish in the later sixteenth century can best be understood

<sup>1</sup> For surveys, see S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, revised by John Trevitt (London: Oak Knoll Press, 1996), 17–54; Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800*, transl. David Gerard (London: Verso, 1990), 180–97.

<sup>2</sup> Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, 170–80.

against the backdrop of Tudor politico-religious reform, with the triumph of an ideology of anglicization in church and state determining the prioritization of English language printing in the seventeenth century. The dominance in Irish printing history of the office of King's Printer from 1600 onwards reflects the centralizing trend of the political and ecclesiastical policies of the Stuart regime. The most serious challenges to the monopoly position of the state printer before the 1660s occurred in the context of insurrection against the deprivation of traditional rights and privileges. Under the Restoration, the printing trades attained a critical mass in circumstances of economic expansion and the emergence of a new socio-cultural elite. A case study of the Dublin printing family of Crooke may serve to illustrate how market forces overcame state control only with great difficulty to change the structure of the Irish print trade before 1700.

## Irish Printing and Tudor Politico-religious Reform

Even before a printer first began to produce books in Ireland there were at least in embryo some of the conditions and ancillary crafts needed to foster a print trade. If ever late medieval Ireland were to produce patrons of printing, for example, it was likely to have been the earls of Kildare. The eighth Earl, Garret More Fitzgerald, was the recipient of the dedication of a work by Maurice O'Fihely, *Enchiridion Fidei*, published in Venice in 1505. Garret Oge, the ninth Earl, was a man of Renaissance tastes and fashionability who had added to the family library at Maynooth a number of printed works, including Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), *The Kyng of England his Answer to Luther* (1521), and books from the press of Caxton and Wynkyn de Woorde.<sup>3</sup> These may have been purchased by him in London or imported and sold in Ireland. If the latter process involved printed sheets, a bookbinder's craft was called upon, and there was operating in Dublin, around the turn of the fifteenth century, one Simon Walsh who was a skinner by trade.<sup>4</sup> He engaged in the binding of books, including at least one printed volume.<sup>5</sup> The earliest

<sup>3</sup> For the catalogues of the Kildare library, see Gearóid Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Crown Surveys of Lands, 1540–41* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992), 312–14, 355–6; for a description of the O'Fihely work, see Tony Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word: A Short Descriptive Catalogue of Early Books, Pamphlets, Newsletters and Broadsheets Relating to Ireland, 1475–1700* (Dublin: Eamon de Búrca, 1997), item 3254. I am very grateful to Margaret Lantry for this reference.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliography Society, 2000), 586. Walsh was admitted as a freeman to the franchises of Dublin in 1476 as a skinner: Colm Lennon and James Murray (eds.), *The Dublin City Franchise Roll, 1468–1512* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 10.

<sup>5</sup> J. L. Robinson, 'Churchwardens' Accounts, 1484–1600, St Werburgh's Church, Dublin', *JRSAL*, 44 (1914), 139.

purveyors of printed books in Ireland were non-specialist merchants, one of the first of whom was James Dartas of Dublin. In 1545 he is recorded as purchasing books in bulk from a London bookseller and shipping them to Ireland for retailing. These included primers, liturgical books, romance literature, and ballads.<sup>6</sup>

Humphrey Powell's pioneering role in Irish book history began with his being granted £20 sterling by the Privy Council 'towards his setting up in Ireland' as royal printer in July 1550.<sup>7</sup> Having already seen some ten books through his press in London, Powell had the distinction of producing the first printed work in Ireland some time after April 1551 at 'the great tower by the crane' or Pricket's tower on Dublin's quays.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, that first title, *The Booke of Common Praier*, was designed to underpin the state's religious reformation, and thereafter the output of Powell's press served to advance the government's ecclesiastical and political programme. His status was ensured by his charter membership of the Stationers' Company in London in 1557, and additional state payments for his official printing. The corpus of his known productions—two printed proclamations of 1561 and 1564, and *A Breve Declaration of Certain Principall Articles of religion* of 1567, besides the 1551 prayer book—is unimpressive, but he probably printed at least a number of other proclamations. Tenuous typographical evidence that a literary work, *The Destruction of Troye*, printed in Dublin at some time between 1558 and 1578 may have had Powell's hand in it suggests that he may not have confined his work to government printing.<sup>9</sup>

Powell's importance in Irish printing history lies not only in his being the first of the King's Printers in Ireland who asserted the royal monopoly over the press there, but also in his providing a focus for aspects of the nascent Irish book trade. His typography and ornaments mark him as a real professional printer, and he also performed the functions of bookbinding and bookselling for a local market. For example, he sold a 'council book' to the Irish council for 16 shillings in 1556, he undertook to sell 600 service and communion books in 1566, and he received a payment for the binding of books as well as for his printing work from the government.<sup>10</sup> His presence as a printer may have stimulated a jobbing trade from approved bodies, as evidenced by Dublin Corporation's payment of £6 to him for printing a table of assize for the city bakers in 1565.<sup>11</sup> Yet he never accomplished the major

<sup>6</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 143–4; for a synopsis of Dartas's later career, see Colm Lennon, *The Lords of Dublin in the Age of Reformation* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1989), 241–2.

<sup>7</sup> For Powell, see E. R. McClintock Dix, 'Humphrey Powell, the first Dublin printer', *PRIA* 27C (1908), 213–16; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 465–6.

<sup>8</sup> See H. B. Clarke (ed.), *Historic Towns Atlas of Ireland: Dublin, Part I* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2002), 21.

<sup>9</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 179, 465–6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 465.

<sup>11</sup> Dublin City Archives, MS MR/35, 'Account Book of Dublin, 1540–1613', p. 202.

project for which his press was augmented by government loans—the printing of the statutes of Ireland. His death may have occurred as the copy was being prepared, and the publication of the statutes was eventually transferred to London.<sup>12</sup>

A landmark in any country's printing history was the appearance of the first printed version of the Bible in the vernacular. In the case of Ireland, a state-backed initiative for making available Irish language texts of Scripture and other religious works languished partly because of a lack of the requisite combination of technical and scholarly expertise.<sup>13</sup> In 1567 Queen Elizabeth had given £66 13s 4d for the typesetting of a font of Gaelic letters to be used for printing an Irish New Testament but not until another payment of £22 13s 4d was made to John Kearney, treasurer of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, in 1570 were the punches, matrices, and fonts produced.<sup>14</sup> The type was used initially the following year, first for a trial broadsheet containing a religious poem by Pilip Dall Ó hUiginn, and then in a work by Kearney, *Aibidil Gaoidheilge agus Caiticiosma*, the first Irish language book to be printed.<sup>15</sup> This Protestant primer was produced at a press set up in the house of Alderman John Ussher at Bridgefoot Street, Dublin, who subsidized the venture.<sup>16</sup> The Irish language font, which appears to have remained unused subsequently for several years, passed to William Kearney, a kinsman of John. He had trained as a printer in London and elsewhere before establishing himself in Trinity College in the mid-1590s.<sup>17</sup> There he was to continue preparing for print the New Testament that had been translated into Irish by John Kearney, Nicholas Walsh, and other Irish scholars. Eventually the text, *Tiomna Nuadh* (New Testament), was published in 1603 under the academic supervision of William Daniel, the work being seen through the press by John Franckton, William Kearney's apprentice.<sup>18</sup> The project came under the patronage of William Ussher, son of Alderman John, a leading Dublin Protestant.<sup>19</sup> William Daniel and John Franckton collaborated again in the production in 1608 of an Irish language version of the *Book of Common Prayer*, *Leabhar na nUrnaightheadh gComhchoidchiond*.<sup>20</sup> Down to 1652 a

<sup>12</sup> D. B. Quinn, 'Information about Dublin Printers, 1556–1573, in English Financial Records', *Irish Booklover*, 28 (1942), 112–15; idem, 'Government Printing and the Publication of the Irish Statutes in the Sixteenth Century', *PRIA*, 49C (1943), 415–24.

<sup>13</sup> For an account of the difficulties encountered, see Nicholas Williams, *I bPrionta i Leabhar: na Protastúin agus Prós na Gaeilge, 1567–1724* (Dublin: An Clóchomhair, 1986), 21–42.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 22; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 329.

<sup>15</sup> The identity of the printer remains unknown. He is unlikely to have been John Kearney himself, whose background was in academic life, whereas Kearney's kinsman, William, did not apparently begin his printing career until about 1573; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 329, 330.

<sup>16</sup> For a synopsis of Ussher's career, see Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, 109–11, 273–4.

<sup>17</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 330.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*; Williams, *I bPrionta i Leabhar*, 27–32.

<sup>19</sup> For William Ussher, see Lennon, *Lords of Dublin*, 97, 137.

<sup>20</sup> Williams, *I bPrionta i Leabhar*, 34–42.

number of books were produced in the original Irish type, but as state and church officials were preoccupied with confirming the faith of English-speaking Protestant congregations in seventeenth-century Ireland, the printing of works in the Irish language was not prioritized.<sup>21</sup>

## The Role of the King's Printer in the Seventeenth Century

John Franckton's appearance as a printer in Dublin about 1600 marks the start of an official continuity in the history of the Irish press. Up to that point both Humphrey Powell and William Kearney had been described as royal printers, but Franckton became the first to be given explicit control of Irish printing and bookselling by patent in the 1600s.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, actual printing activity had been erratic in terms of equipment, patronage, and location before the seventeenth century. Although fluidity still characterized these elements after 1600, the existence of a legal framework for printing and book-selling helped to give shape to a burgeoning book trade. Of course, practical difficulties remained in the way of a printing operation in Ireland, among them, for example, the lack of an indigenous papermaking industry. Efforts to encourage papermilling in the Dublin region in the 1590s had come to nothing, and for at least a century, the bulk of paper used in Irish printing had to be imported—at considerable expense.<sup>23</sup> Underlying the particular deficiencies in respect of the print trade, the general problems created by the comparative smallness of the Irish market and the unsettled nature of the society and polity in much of the country persisted during the earlier seventeenth century. Yet considerable progress was made in the organization of both printing and marketing of books by the 1640s.<sup>24</sup>

Whereas Franckton had been appointed King's Printer in Ireland in 1604, a patent granted to him in 1609 made explicit the terms of the government monopoly of printing and bookselling to be exercised by him.<sup>25</sup> As printer to the Crown, Franckton not only had responsibility for publishing official texts such as statutes and proclamations and books over which the state asserted

<sup>21</sup> E. W. Lynam, *The Irish Character in Print, 1571–1923* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 5–8; Risteárd Giltrap, *An Ghaeilge in Eaglais na hÉireann* (Dublin: Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise, 1990), 11–21.

<sup>22</sup> For a discussion of the official printers, see Mary Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent, 1600–1800', *Irish Booklore*, 4 (1978), 79–95. For Franckton see R. J. Hunter, 'John Franckton', in Charles Benson and Siobhan Fitzpatrick (eds.), *That Woman—Studies in Irish Bibliography: A Festschrift for Mary 'Paul' Pollard* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2005), 1–26.

<sup>23</sup> For this aspect, see Mary Pollard, 'Papermaking in Ireland in 1590', *Irish Booklore*, 3 (1976–7), 83–6.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of the context, see Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', *Irish Economic and Social History*, 15 (1988), 81–8.

<sup>25</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 79–80.



control, including grammars, Bibles, and almanacs, but ‘all other books whatsoever in the English, Irish or any other language’. He also had exclusive responsibility for the stationer’s trades in Ireland, including the binding, covering, and selling of all books, no one else being permitted to engage in the book trade without a licence from Franckton. Furthermore, in pursuance of his right of oversight of the importation of books, the King’s Printer had the power to seize and confiscate any volumes brought into the country without a licence and all books ‘repugnant’ to the laws of the realm, including recusant texts.<sup>26</sup> This tight control of the Irish printing trade was asserted by the state through the agency of individuals or a corporation during the seventeenth century, though in the face of mounting opposition towards the end of the period.

In terms of the output of his press, John Franckton’s achievement as a printer during the course of his twenty-year career in Dublin seems modest enough on the face of it. In all he saw just under a dozen works through the printing press, a fact perhaps that allowed his critics to describe him as ‘a person not fitt for that office [of King’s Printer]’.<sup>27</sup> Yet he did print some important volumes, including the Irish New Testament and *Book of Common Prayer*, as well as two legal texts.<sup>28</sup> Whether he availed of his permission to train up skilled workmen in his trade is unclear, but in 1618 his position as sole agent for royal printing and stationery came under attack from the London Company of Stationers. Ambitious to extend their monopolistic position in respect of their privileged selling of stocks of books, they decided to bid to take over the office of King’s Printer and stationer in order to float an Irish stock, £900 worth of books purchased by the partners in the Company for import to Ireland. To further their scheme in 1618, they denigrated John Franckton’s record as a printer, and pointed up his ‘infirmities, both of body and mind’. By 1620, the Stationers’ Company had engineered the surrender by Franckton of his patent just before his death, and the Society of Stationers (as it called itself in the Irish context) was now legally in full control of the Irish print and book trades. Its factors aspired to the control of the Dublin printing press, the import of books into Ireland, all bookselling within the country, and the censorship of prohibited texts.<sup>29</sup> Yet the phase of corporatist exercise of the royal monopoly of the book trade was not an unalloyed success. Although the productivity of the Dublin press increased between 1618 and 1641, a total of eighty-six books being produced, or 4.6 per annum, sales of the Irish stock appear to have been disappointing, and by 1641 the Stationers’

<sup>26</sup> Pollard, ‘Control of the Press’, 80–1.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>28</sup> See E. R. McClintock Dix, *List of Books Printed in Dublin from 1601–1700* 2 vols. (Dublin 1898–1912), i. 15, 16, 19; Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word*, items 415, 1327, 1687, 2436.

<sup>29</sup> Pollard, ‘Control of the Press’, 81–2.

Company were giving consideration to selling off their franchise for the Irish book market.<sup>30</sup>

The comparative sluggishness of the printing concern as taken over from Franckton may have been a source of disappointment. Despite the fact that books were cheaper to produce in Dublin than in London, the numbers printed compared unfavourably with those of England and Scotland. It has been suggested that a shortage of material to publish may have been a cause of the low productivity of the Irish press. The pool of Protestant literati was small, potential patrons were scarce, and the bulk of the population, comprising Old English and Gaelic Catholics, lay outside the pale of potential publishers or readers of items produced by the state printing press.<sup>31</sup> Another contributory factor to the disillusionment of the London Stationers with their Irish venture may have been the failure of sales of the stock of Irish books to live up to expectations. Forced to import such basic works as Bibles and schoolbooks because of the relative inertia of the Dublin press, the Company's factors were obliged to sell at prices double the London ones in real terms.<sup>32</sup>

Nor was the Stationers' monopoly enforceable. A buoyant trade in books imported from Britain and the Continent, conducted by merchants in the southern Irish ports, evidently undercut the selling operation of the Company factors.<sup>33</sup> Compounding these weaknesses may have been a potentially damaging lack of engagement with the civic and commercial milieu of Dublin in the 1620s. The early factors in Dublin during the period were prominent in the London book trade, spending little time in Ireland. The printing of the seventh edition of Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* in Dublin in 1621 was for export to the English market. Not until the succession of William Bladen as factor in 1631 was there a printer-stationer in Dublin who devoted himself to building a career within the community. Himself an apprentice of a factor, Arthur Johnson, Bladen (who became a freeman, alderman, and mayor of Dublin) was in fact the sole purchaser of the Stationers' Company printing and stationery patent in October 1639.<sup>34</sup> He bought the Irish stock for £2,600 but only ever paid £947.<sup>35</sup>

William Bladen occupied the position as printer first to the King and then to the Commonwealth in Ireland for twenty-one turbulent years.<sup>36</sup> During the 1640s he attempted in vain to uphold the state monopoly of printing in

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 82–3; Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', 83.

<sup>31</sup> Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', 83–7.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>33</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 1–13.

<sup>34</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 82–3.

<sup>35</sup> Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', 87.

<sup>36</sup> For a synopsis of William Bladen's career, see Pollard, *Dictionary*, 37–9.

the face of an upsurge of activity from provincial presses. Thereafter under the Commonwealth he benefited by the rigorous exercise of state control over the press when all printing was again centralized, but he also operated under conditions of strict censorship of material in press. From 1657, before a work could be published it had to receive an imprimatur from the council of state. After the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Bladen was out of favour and lost the royal printing patent to John Crooke, a London stationer, who had sold books in Dublin in the 1640s. For a decade thereafter, William Bladen and, after 1663, his heir, Revd Thomas Bladen, found themselves challenging the monopoly of the King's Printer.<sup>37</sup> In doing so, they provided a precedent for the more serious opposition to Crown control of the press in Ireland that emerged in the final two decades of the seventeenth century.

Already, competition for the Dublin patentee had come in the 1640s in the form of rival printing enterprises in the provincial cities of Waterford, Kilkenny, and Cork. In circumstances of rebellion and counter-rebellion printed material emanated from the confederate political and religious leadership, the Ormondist interest, and the parliamentary side. Pamphlets, proclamations, peace treaties, and historical narratives made up the complement of this outpouring. Waterford was the first provincial borough to foster a printing press from 1643, to be followed by Kilkenny from 1646 and Cork from 1648. The professional standards of the editions that came from the provincial presses during this phase suggest that their operators, Thomas Bourke, Peter de Pienne, William Smith, and George Sarrazin, were experienced printers, although there is a scarcity of information about their training in Ireland or abroad. That there was mobility of both printers and presses in the 1640s is indicated by the appearance of works by most of these printers in more than one centre, sometimes with the same type and ornaments as used elsewhere. Although the operation of these presses undoubtedly revealed a reserve of skills in the print trade, only in Cork did provincial printing continue from the 1650s until the later seventeenth century.<sup>38</sup>

The four decades to the end of the century are characterized by a struggle on the part of the King's Printer to maintain the Crown monopoly in Ireland, as liberalization of the book trade gradually occurred. A critical breakdown in civic order in the mid-century decades may have stimulated printing outside of Dublin in the short term but the rapid demographic and economic expansion of the capital city after the Restoration boosted publishing and

<sup>37</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 83–6.

<sup>38</sup> See W. K. Sessions, *The First Printers in Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny Pre-1700* (York: Sessions, 1990), 1–23, 91–116, 179–205; E. R. McClintock Dix, 'Printing in the City of Kilkenny in the Seventeenth Century', *PRIA*, 32C (1914), 125–37; Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word*, 985.

book-buying exponentially. Another significant pole of influence in the Irish book trade emerged with the recognition by charter of the Guild of St Luke, the Company of Stationers (as well as cutlers and painter-stainers) in 1670.<sup>39</sup> It fell to members of the extended Crooke family who held the patentee's position throughout the period to contend over the comprehensive nature of the royal patent, first with the Bladens down to 1673, and thereafter with Joseph Ray. William Bladen's press passed to his son, Thomas, who was an Anglican clergyman, and its imprint appeared on at least six books in the period down to 1670. Despite the official licensing system that the King's Printer was supposed to enforce, only one of these volumes contained the state's imprimatur. It may be questioned indeed to what extent the royal licence was actually sought and granted at this time. After a series of legal actions, the King's Printer, in the person of Mary Crooke, succeeded in gaining the closure and confiscation of the Bladen press in 1673.<sup>40</sup>

More serious was the threat to the Crown printer's monopoly from Joseph Ray, a London stationer, who brought his own type fonts with him to set up a printing shop in Dublin by 1680. In his vigorous challenging of the royal patentee over every aspect of the book trade in Ireland, he exposed a series of anomalies. In England the King's Printer's monopoly extended only to the category of privileged books including Bibles, almanacs, and official state texts such as statutes, whereas in Ireland, by contrast, the whole gamut of published material was covered. Also, the fact that the patent for Ireland allowed for the training of apprentices and journeymen within the King's Printer's workshop seemed to Ray to imply that an extension of the trade was envisaged. The growing demand for books in Ireland by the 1680s was not being met by the restrictive system of state control and censorship. Despite these strenuous arguments Ray was unsuccessful in overturning the monopoly held by the Crookes, though they failed in his case to win an order for the confiscation of his press. Ray continued to print throughout the 1680s, and indeed vindicated his position as competitor by being appointed printer to the city of Dublin. In this respect the support of the Guild of St Luke for his campaign was indubitably significant. Although in 1693 Andrew Crooke received from the state a full reiteration of the King's Printer's patent, in practice by the end of the century there were competing presses operating in Dublin and Cork, even in the production of the 'privileged books'.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> For the Guild's foundation charter see Oliver Snoddy, 'The Charter of the Guild of St Luke, 1670', *JRSAL*, 98 (1968), 79–87.

<sup>40</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 86, 91.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 87–91.

## The Family of Croke and the Irish Print Trade: A Case Study

The constant assertion, if not successful maintenance, of the royal patent for exclusive control of the print trade in Ireland down to the 1730s owes much to the contribution of the extended family of Croke, which became the first printing dynasty to operate in the country. The nexus of familial interest that the Crookes developed in the latter half of the seventeenth century in Dublin aided their resilience in the face of numerous challenges. Although more typical perhaps of socio-economic patterns in printing and bookselling abroad than in Ireland, the experiences of the Croke family of printers and stationers in Dublin adumbrate the evolution of a dynamic indigenous print trade in the eighteenth century, incorporating many features of the nascent European industry. These include an entrepreneurial drive within a traditional guild-dominated milieu, innovative organizational structures within a workshop system, propitious marital links within the trade supplementing business ties, the emergence of a female head of a printing concern, and the effective transmission of skills and capital through at least three generations.<sup>42</sup>

John Croke senior who joined a bookselling partnership near Dublin Castle in 1637 was born in Oxford, one of three stationer brothers who became connected with the Irish book trade.<sup>43</sup> Whereas Andrew, the eldest, operated mainly in London, and Edmund, the second brother, only survived for a year in the Dublin partnership, John's commitment to Ireland was long term. His shop in Dublin was very well stocked, but after the rebellion broke out in October 1641 the trade declined and John complained of crippling debts in 1642. Before relocating to London in 1648 where he became involved in the printing industry, he worked on in Ireland for at least five years, evidently taking advantage of the confused circumstances of the time to conduct a rival business to that of the King's patentee, William Bladen. In London he married Mary Tooke, and her brother, Benjamin, became Croke's apprentice. When the monarchy was restored in 1660, John ousted William Bladen as King's Printer in Ireland, being favoured for having 'hazarded his life' for friends of Charles II. His style of management of the Irish patent was dilatory, however, allowing Bladen to continue his enterprise and muster support at court. In a letter to Archbishop John Bramhall from London in August 1661, Croke complained of interference in his patent by Bladen's supporters.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book*, 129–55.

<sup>43</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 132–4; see also E. R. McClintock Dix, 'The Croke Family—Printers in Dublin in the Seventeenth Century', *Bibliographical Society of Ireland, Papers*, 2 (1921), 16–17.

<sup>44</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Mss of R.R. Hastings*, 4 vols. (London: HMSO, 1947), iv. 135–6.

Crooke divided his time between London and Dublin, where a number of governmental and other publications issued from his press in type new to the Irish printing scene. When he died in 1669, his widow, Mary Crooke, took over the running of the business on behalf of her extended family, including their seven children, two of whom, Andrew and John, followed their parents into the trade.

Unlike her husband, Mary Crooke devoted herself full time to the royal Irish printing patent until her sons came of age.<sup>45</sup> Mary's performance as effective head of the printing house based at Skinner's Row was extremely impressive. Being widowed with the eldest of her children barely in their teens, she took over a debt-ridden concern and passed it on eventually in a profitable condition to her son, Andrew, in 1685. She saw off the serious challenge of the Bladen press in 1673, acquiring the confiscated type thereof for her own workshop, and participated actively in the campaign against Joseph Ray's questioning of the Irish monopoly. Her legal battles involved her in litigation not only with outside bodies and individuals but also with members of her own family. During her dispute with her son, Andrew, in 1684, she removed her printing operation to premises on Ormond Quay. Above all, she kept the press busy with dozens of texts, including proclamations and other government documents, books, and pamphlets. Although the quality of printing was variable, due to the worn nature of the type used, Mary was highly conscientious, sometimes sitting up all night to despatch government printing jobs.<sup>46</sup>

Mary Crooke's crucial role in preserving and strengthening the Irish printing trade from 1669 to 1685 was greatly assisted by the support of her brother, Benjamin Tooke.<sup>47</sup> His emergence as a stationer in Dublin by 1669 is testimony to the value of the apprenticeship system that (belatedly within the Irish print trade) was to offer continuity and stability. Although he held the title of King's Printer continuously from 1669 to 1693, sharing it periodically with members of the Crooke family, Tooke never played an active part in running the printing house. His name appeared on some of its imprints but his main concentration seems to have been on bookselling in both Dublin and London. His principal contribution lay in his generously facilitating the transmission of the tenure of the Crown's patent to the younger generation of Crookes. Explicitly holding it in trust for Mary and her children in 1669, Tooke was granted a new patent in 1671 to be held by himself and John Crooke junior. On the latter's death in 1683, Tooke was the titular patentee until 1693, but he assigned the office to Andrew Crooke, at first with a

<sup>45</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 134–6, for a synopsis of her career; her will, dated 23 June 1685, is in TCD, MS 1995–2008/30A.

<sup>46</sup> Dix, 'The Crooke Family—Printers in Dublin in the Seventeenth Century', 17.

<sup>47</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 571.

partner, then, from 1689, in Andrew's own right. No doubt Benjamin Tooke fulfilled a useful function for the royal printing house in his foundation membership of the Guild of St Luke that incorporated the Irish stationers. In his dual role as King's patentee and Guild freeman, he may have had a supervisory function in respect of the activities of his fellow stationers. Although he was not a party to the sharing of the profits of the Crooke family enterprise, Tooke certainly benefited by his connection with the Irish book monopoly, and he continued to pursue his bookselling trade in London and Dublin after fully ceding the patent to Andrew Crooke in 1693.

The two sons of John and Mary Crooke, John and Andrew, held the royal printership either by assignment or in their own names from 1671 to 1732, with a hiatus from 1683 to 1686. The younger John's name appears on an imprint from the Skinner's Row press (coupled with that of Benjamin Tooke) in 1679.<sup>48</sup> Having been assigned a quarter of the profits of the firm by a deed of his mother in 1680, John's career as printer was shortlived: he died in 1683. He was succeeded by his brother, Andrew (though technically Benjamin Tooke was the nominated patentee), but a family dispute marked his entry into the headship of the house.<sup>49</sup> Entitled now on the death of his brother to half of the profits on condition that he properly attend to the business (his mother and her other children retaining the other half), Andrew appears to have been neglectful initially. His mother took action in 1684 to restrain him from retaining the Skinner's Row premises and from operating a rival press with a partner, Samuel Helsham. Mary's setting up as a printer on Ormond Quay was as a result of the feud, and Andrew initiated proceedings against her and others to enforce an agreed sale of the stock and goodwill of that new office for £400. In 1685 a settlement was reached whereby Andrew would take over the running of the presses from Mary and receive the patent for King's Printer. Although he did not receive the title in his own name until 1693, Andrew was functioning in that capacity for several years previously, with and without his partner, Helsham. He continued to print for the government, but many other printers and stationers were engaged in publishing and selling books in Dublin and elsewhere, even within the official privileged category. When he died in 1732, Andrew was succeeded in the trade by Anne Crooke, but in that year the patent for King's Printer passed out of the family to one George Grierson.<sup>50</sup>

The years of Andrew Crooke's enjoyment of the title of King's Printer in his own right from 1693 were marked by an intensification of activity in the

<sup>48</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 134.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 129–31; Dix, 'The Crooke Family—Printers in Dublin', 16–17.

<sup>50</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 131; Anne's relationship to Andrew is not clear: she is not mentioned as one of his daughters and his wife, Catherine Nowlan, died before 1723. It is possible that Anne was his second wife and widow.

Irish print trade. With the ultimate failure of the battle to exclude Joseph Ray and others from the Irish market, the Crookes' upholding of their monopolistic position was doomed. Yet the very process of resistance to the intrusions upon their privileges down to that point and beyond helped to consolidate the printing trades in Dublin. Symbolic of this is the fact that the types being used in the late seventeenth century included some that were in fact used by the very first printers to practise in Ireland, Humphrey Powell, William Kearney, and John Franckton.<sup>51</sup> This reflects at once the narrowness of the mainstream of Irish printing down to the 1680s and 1690s and the strong sense of tradition built up through the tenure of the King's printership. It was the Crookes' contribution to bind together within a proper system the elements of the trade such as printing, binding, and selling, but their commercial success evoked competition. Although they failed ultimately to preserve the protective force of their patent, they were in their time a singularly successful printing dynasty and also served as exemplars.

By the last decade of the seventeenth century there were several printers and booksellers at work in Dublin. Some indication of the intensity of the competition is suggested in separate disputes in the late 1690s involving Thomas Somervell and John Dunton. The plans of the former to publish a luxury edition of the New Testament fell foul of 'several booksellers of Dublin', and the guild of stationers met to adjudicate on the best way to deal with the flawed edition.<sup>52</sup> Dunton's run-in with the Dublin print trade is described in graphic detail in his *Dublin Scuffle*, published in 1698 to give vent to his complaints.<sup>53</sup> The capital city dominated the Irish printing industry, producing 97.5 per cent of all first editions printed in the 1690s.<sup>54</sup> Only in Cork and Belfast was there any significant printing activity elsewhere in that decade. Indeed, the hegemony of Dublin is reflected in the fact that, of 1,782 first Irish editions printed between 1550 and 1700, 1677 (or 94 per cent) were produced there, the bulk of the remainder appearing in the southern printing surge of the 1640s.<sup>55</sup> The key decade for Irish printing was the 1680s when the productivity of the presses rose by almost 80 per cent.<sup>56</sup> The growth of allied crafts such as papermaking, type-founding, and engraving, though yet in their infancy,<sup>57</sup> the organization of a sophisticated print workshop system, and the ever-increasing demand for books, pamphlets, and newspapers at the end of the century ensured that the Irish print trade would come of age in the eighteenth century.

<sup>51</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 130–1, 134–5.

<sup>52</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 92.

<sup>53</sup> See John Dunton, *The Dublin Scuffle*, ed. Andrew Carpenter (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

<sup>54</sup> Statistics drawn from Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word*, 985–8.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 987–8.

<sup>57</sup> Pollard, *Dictionary*, 125, 156, 175–7, 244, 267, 296, 325, 506.



# The Print Trade, 1700–1800

*Colm Lennon*

By comparison with their predecessors, the practitioners of the print trade in Ireland between 1700 and 1800 enjoyed a golden age.<sup>1</sup> Both the numbers of those involved in printing and its allied activities and the volume of material that emanated from the printing presses increased exponentially during the eighteenth century. Freed from many of the restrictions of previous eras, the printers, booksellers, and other allied trades established a vibrant and organized business in books and printed items that encompassed most of the country. As the numbers of readers grew, especially in the middle classes, and education developed, the thirst for knowledge and information expanded, and printers and booksellers clamoured to fulfil the new demands. The types of printed matter also became very varied, for besides books and textbooks, there was a taste for many new forms of information in printed form, including newspapers and periodicals. Pamphlets were extremely popular as political discourse intensified, and many forms of popular literature from broadsheets to ballads were eagerly sought and read by the newly literate classes. Printed items also included many staples of social life, including handbills advertising entertainments, tickets, and cards. All of this material entered into circulation in a world undergoing rapid commercial and technical change, as well as experiencing an intellectual ferment in consonance with the Enlightenment.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For recent historical scholarship on aspects of Irish printing in the eighteenth century, see J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man: Popular Culture in Ulster, 1700–1900* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1987); Robert Munter, *A Dictionary of the Print Trade in Ireland, 1550–1775* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1988); Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Vincent Kinane, *A History of Dublin University Press, 1734–1976* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1994); Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingtoke: Macmillan, 1997); and James Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800: A Bibliographical Enquiry* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998). The foundations for research in every aspect of Irish printing in the early modern period have been laid in Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> For the general background to eighteenth-century printing, see S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, revised by John Trevitt (London: Oak Knoll Press, 1996), 106–29; Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800*, transl. David Gerard

At the outset of this study of the operation of the eighteenth-century Irish print trade, it may be worthwhile to survey the geographical spread of the printing industry throughout the island both to discern the pattern of the dispersal and sale of printed items and to contextualize the print trade in Dublin, undoubtedly the centre of gravity of printing in Ireland. In examining the structure and regulation of the trades, the role of the guild of stationers of St Luke bears scrutiny as an agency of control of personnel and produce in the printing industry in a period of significant growth, as also does the evolution of more specialist roles and functions among the key practitioners, such as the booksellers and publishers, printers, and bookbinders. This nexus of relations between the sectors of the industry developed within a commercial and cultural milieu shaped to a large extent not only by the interests of the English book trade but also by British colonial policy. In order to comprehend fully the success of the Irish print trade in responding creatively to the challenges presented during the eighteenth century, a brief investigation of how the areas of industrial protection, copyright for published material, and the direction of imperial trade impinged upon printing and bookselling in Ireland will be useful.

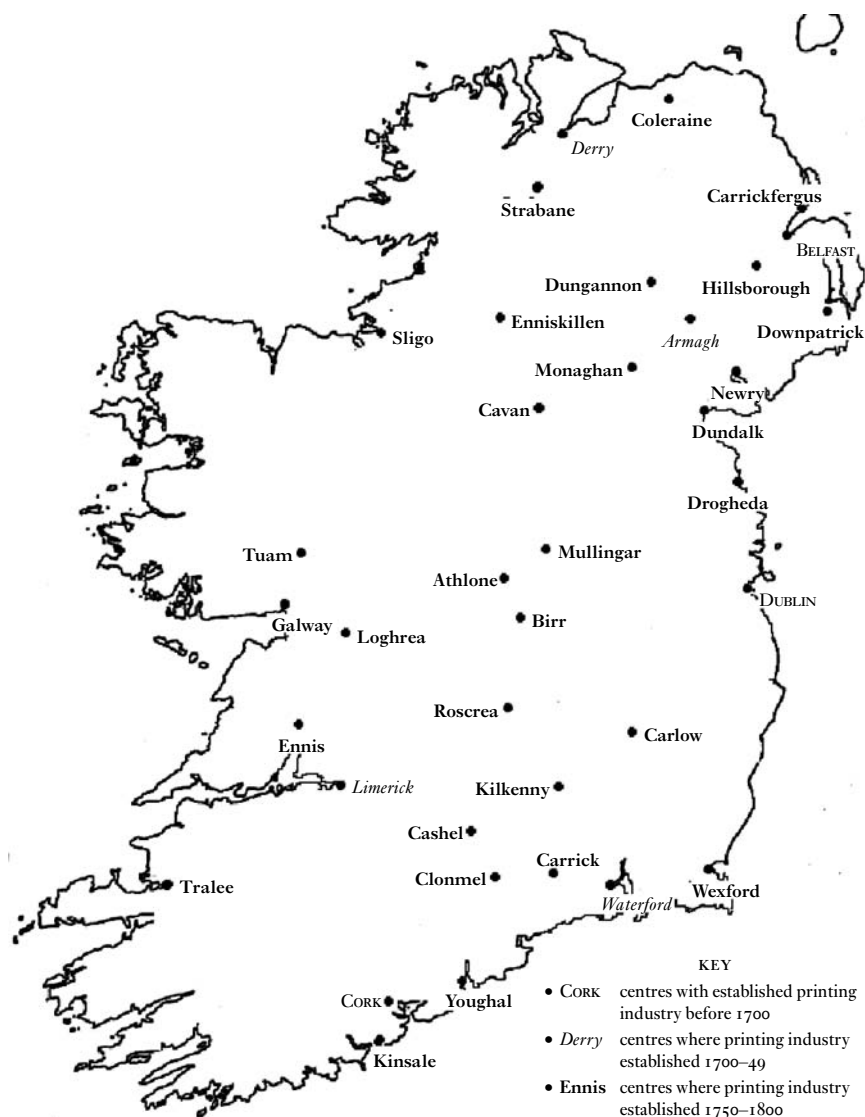
## Geographical Spread of Printing in the Eighteenth Century

Although Dublin continued to dominate the Irish print trade during the eighteenth century, the rapid expansion in all aspects of the distribution and production of printed items had ramifications throughout all the provinces.<sup>3</sup> In the 1690s, there were printing presses established only in Dublin, Belfast, and Cork, but 100 years later thirty-four Irish towns and cities were hosts to printing work, eighteen of them in the period from 1760 (see Figure 3).<sup>4</sup> In addition, the system of distribution was strengthened immeasurably throughout the country during that span, with a sophisticated layering of

(London: Verso, 1990), 155–66; Roger Chartier, *The Role of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Kevin Whelan, 'The Republic in the Village: The Dissemination and Reception of Popular Political Literature in the 1790s', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 101–40, explores the impact of European ideas on Irish readers through the medium of print.

<sup>3</sup> For a set of recent perspectives see the essays in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*.

<sup>4</sup> See W. G. Wheeler, 'The Spread of Provincial Printing in Ireland up to 1850', *Irish Booklore*, 3 (1978), 8–9.



3. The development of Irish provincial printing, 1700–1800, by Colm Lennon.

retail activity in printed products and stationery, and various allied trades such as bookbinding, papermaking, engraving, and book-lending becoming more firmly domiciled in many centres. As with the relationship between London and the English provinces in respect of the print trade, Dublin had previously exerted a stultifying influence over Irish provincial centres, due

mainly in the latter case to the monopolistic position of the King's Printer who was based in Dublin.<sup>5</sup> Once that exclusive patent was successfully challenged in Dublin and then elsewhere, the spread of printing was feasible, but rapid growth in the number of presses did not take place until the later eighteenth century. By contrast with their English counterparts, however, Irish towns and cities were not subject to the Copyright Act of 1709, which vested publishing rights overwhelmingly in the hands of the major London printers.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the restrictions on provincial English printers were to prove something of a bonanza for Irish bookseller–printers who were to reprint works over which the London book trade claimed copyright in England. A factor that put a brake on the growth of an indigenous Irish printing industry in many provincial centres, however, was the smallness of the local market for books, with a consequent continuing reliance on supply and distribution of works printed in Dublin or in England. Galway, a major port city since the medieval period, did not produce a printed work until the 1750s, and Limerick and Waterford's printing presses were scarcely more active until after 1800.<sup>7</sup> As in England, however, it was the development of newspaper printing that gave a major boost to provincial (and metropolitan) printing in the eighteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

By the 1790s, at least twenty-four provincial newspapers had appeared with varying degrees of regularity, together with a small number of periodicals.<sup>9</sup> Not only were provincial printing shops kept busy producing papers and journals, but also the formal and informal networks of distribution that came into being to disseminate them provided a stimulus for trade in all manner of printed goods. Newspapers provided a valuable advertising outlet for booksellers from Dublin and London, and also aided the system of publication by subscription by giving details of prospective printed works.<sup>10</sup> Printers engaged in producing newspapers turned to jobbing work

<sup>5</sup> For the relationship between the London and provincial booksellers in England, see John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); for Ireland, see Mary Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent, 1600–1800', *Irish Booklore*, 4 (1978), 79–95, and Colm Lennon, 'The Structure of the Print Trade, 1550–1700' (ch. 4 of this book).

<sup>6</sup> For the subject of the Copyright Act of 1709 and Ireland, see Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England*, 2–11; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800*, 69–81.

<sup>7</sup> For Galway, see Vincent Kinane, 'The Early Book Trades in Galway', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 51–6; for Limerick and Waterford, see Hugh Fenning, 'The Catholic Press in Munster in the Eighteenth Century', *ibid.*, 25–6.

<sup>8</sup> See Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England*, 16–19, for the influence of newspaper publishing on the English provinces.

<sup>9</sup> Wheeler, 'The Spread of Provincial Printing in Ireland up to 1850', 11–12; Barbara Hayley and Enda McKay (eds.), *Three Hundred Years of Irish Periodicals* (Mullingar: Association of Irish Learned Journals, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> See Joanna Finegan, 'Georgian Drogheda and the Printed Word', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 37–43.

to supplement their income, the work of George Conolly in Galway from the 1790s, for example, encompassing the printing of newspapers, schoolbooks, religious works, chapbooks, cards, ‘shop-bills, hand-bills, labels of all kinds, bills of lading and parcels posting-bills’, as well as the selling of stationery, book-selling, and bookbinding.<sup>11</sup> The influence of the practitioners of the Dublin book trade in the provinces is glimpsed in their use of local newspapers for advertisements, and of the retailing system of booksellers, general merchants, and travelling chapmen to sell their wares.<sup>12</sup> They also became subscribers to printing ventures in the provinces, participating as booksellers in the financing of publications in Belfast, for example, and acting as agents for subscriptions in the capital.<sup>13</sup> Many of the pioneering printers in the Irish provinces were closely connected to the Dublin trade through their training, family ties, or previous printing experience, among them being William Flin in Cork in the 1760s, John Fleming and John Jones in Drogheda in the 1770s, and Michael Parker in Sligo in the same decade.<sup>14</sup> Of all the provincial cities, perhaps only Belfast offered a significant counterweight to Dublin in the Irish print trade, in terms not only of the numbers of its booksellers and printers, but also of its acting as a nucleus of distribution for its large Ulster hinterland.<sup>15</sup>

## Structure and Regulation of the Print Trades: The Key Practitioners

The nature of the relationship between Dublin and the provincial centres of the print trade was dictated essentially by the market and not by any regulatory force emanating from the capital. The sheer size of both the industry and the potential readership of its products within the Dublin region may have accounted for the national dominance of the metropolis,<sup>16</sup> but it also rendered almost impossible control thereof by any one trade guild. The guild of stationers, cutlers, and painters-stainers, dedicated to St Luke, which had been incorporated by royal charter in 1670, aspired to control the Irish print trade, but its variegated composition no less than the sheer dynamism of the printing industry meant that its professional influence over the printing

<sup>11</sup> Kinane, ‘The Early Book Trades in Galway’, 60–3.

<sup>12</sup> See Adams, *Printed Word and the Common Man*, 23–41.

<sup>13</sup> See Wesley McCann, ‘The Distribution of Books from Belfast: The Evidence of Subscription Lists’, in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 77–84.

<sup>14</sup> See Fenning, ‘The Catholic Press in Munster in the Eighteenth Century’, 22–3; Finegan, ‘Georgian Drogheda and the Printed Word’, 38, 43; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 215–16, 218–20, 449.

<sup>15</sup> Adams, *Printed Word and the Common Man*, 23–38.

<sup>16</sup> See Wheeler, ‘The Spread of Provincial Printing in Ireland up to 1850’, 8.

crafts was quite limited, especially in the later eighteenth century.<sup>17</sup> While cutlers and painters-stainers may have outnumbered the stationers in the guild at its establishment, over the following 130 years the body came to contain numerous practitioners in the stationers' category, including printers, bookbinders, and members of allied trades. It also attempted to control the career paths of apprentices and journeymen in increasing numbers down to the end of the eighteenth century. Yet the regulations drawn up over that time reveal little practical application of a professional code to the industry at large, the few relevant rules relating to fairly minor matters such as the independent activity of hawkers.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps the sole attestation of the Guild of St Luke as a body engaged in a key agency of publication occurred during the conflict between Charles Lucas and the corporation of Dublin in 1650, when the Lord Chief Justice warned the guild members against the printing of seditious and libellous papers.<sup>19</sup> Efforts by William Sleater, printer and bookseller, to codify the rules of the guild in order to foster an appreciation of the 'value of printing work' in 1799 came to nothing.<sup>20</sup> The major contribution of the guild to raising the profile of the print trade in Dublin lay in the elaborate and costly displays on the day of the riding of the municipal franchises, culminating in extravagant pageants in the 1760s. On those occasions, mounted on a carriage drawn by six black horses and attended by the guild officers and members arrayed in elaborate costumes, a full-scale printing operation was undertaken by half a dozen practitioners—two pressmen, a compositor, a hackney author, a printer's devil, and a painter—who printed off, proof-read, and illustrated poems and handbills to be dispersed among the spectators.<sup>21</sup>

As the image-building of the Guild of St Luke appeared to take precedence over its exercising of control over the professional printers and stationers in the later eighteenth century, a number of groups of practitioners formed bonds in the pursuance of their specific trading interests. An examination of these combinations among the bookbinders, the journeymen-printers, and the booksellers serves to demonstrate the changing patterns of specialization within the trade, and also to highlight some of the commercial and craftworking issues that shaped the economic and cultural milieu in which printing was carried on in Ireland before 1800.

<sup>17</sup> For the guild's foundation charter see Oliver Snoddy, 'The Charter of the Guild of St Luke, 1670', *JRSAI*, 98 (1968), 79–87; for the surviving documentation, see Mary Clark and Raymond Refaüssé (eds.), *Directory of Historic Dublin Guilds* (Dublin: Dublin Public Libraries, 1993), 19–20; for a survey of its history, see Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800*, 3–25, and Pollard, *Dictionary*, pp. ix–xxxiv.

<sup>18</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 9–12.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 69–70; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 20.

<sup>20</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 23; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 167–8.

<sup>21</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 13–17.

Bookbinding had traditionally been an adjunct of the stationer's trade, booksellers practising as bookbinders and indeed some bookbinders becoming printers, but it was only in the early decades of the eighteenth century that bookbinding developed into a separate mystery or art with its own *éclat*.<sup>22</sup> This was underscored by the emergence of a separate business grouping of bookbinders by 1743 that continued to press the cause of the trade down to the 1790s. The nub of the bookbinders' concerns from the 1760s onwards was the high cost of leather that forced them to increase binding charges for all volumes of all sizes. This proposed price rise brought into being a consortium of twenty-four master booksellers and master printers that accused the bookbinders of intimidating their fellow practitioners outside their group to charge the increased rates. As a riposte, the booksellers advised that book-buyers should opt for 'blue paper' or boards rather than leather bindings, and they threatened to import foreign binders to conduct the work more cheaply.<sup>23</sup> Although the higher prices for bookbinding may have been adopted in any case by the late 1760s, a blow had been struck at the craft by the advocacy of the powerful bookselling interest group of a 'blue board' or publisher's binding. Despite the fact that they described themselves in 1791 in a price list for bookbinding as 'the Company of the Bookbinders of Dublin', the number of specialist binders at work in Dublin declined from a peak of forty-two in 1768 to less than ten by 1800.<sup>24</sup> Many bookbinders turned to bookselling, leaving a small minority to cater to the luxury market for fine leather binding and tooling.<sup>25</sup>

Another group within the print trade that separated itself out from the amorphous structure of the guild of stationers was that of the journeymen-printers, comprising compositors and pressmen.<sup>26</sup> Originally absorbed within the guild from 1670, the journeymen-printers had established their own identity within the trade by the 1760s. They came into confrontation with the master printers and master printer-booksellers who accused the journeymen of the enrolment of excessive numbers of apprentices and the admission of inadequately trained journeymen into their ranks. The journeymen-printers responded in 1766 by presenting a public evaluation of the work of eighteen masters of whom only George Faulkner came in for praise.<sup>27</sup> By 1773 the journeymen-printers were organized into a body called the Amicable Society of Printers when they entered the lists against a publication called the *Public Monitor*. They took their stand in the name of 'our Palladium, the Liberty of the Press', and eventually succeeded in challenging the perceived defamatory

<sup>22</sup> For an account of the bookbinding craft, see Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 46–54. One of the most famous of all printers, Christopher Plantin of Antwerp, was trained as a bookbinder: see Colin Clair, *Christopher Plantin* (London: Plantin Publishers, 1987).

<sup>23</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 47–51.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 53–4; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 126–9.

<sup>26</sup> See Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 41–6.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 51–3.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 41–3.

and scurrilous nature of its columns. Of more moment for the trade in the prosecution of the issue, however, was the government's use of the *Monitor's* excesses to introduce the first Stamp Act of 1774 that imposed duties on paper and stationery, as well as on advertisements.<sup>28</sup> The journeymen-printer branch of the trade continued to act in concert down to 1796 when, against the backdrop of a rise in the cost of native paper, its members petitioned the Irish House of Commons to reduce the tax on imported papers, but in the wake of the 1798 rebellion the state administration raised duties on newspapers and decreed the licensing of all printers by the Stamp Commissioners.<sup>29</sup> By 1800 the journeymen-printers had established themselves as a distinctive socio-economic group within the print trade, their activities being described as 'incipient trade-unionism'.<sup>30</sup> In that year, the basic rate of pay for compositors in Dublin was on a par with that of their London counterparts, whereas the wages of pressmen in Dublin were marginally lower than those in London.<sup>31</sup>

Both of the trade branches, the bookbinders and journeymen-printers, had come into conflict in the 1760s with the master printers and the master printer-booksellers who appear to have bonded themselves for a time into a fraternity, entitled the Company of Booksellers. As this appeared in imprints in Dublin books in the later eighteenth century, the appellation seems to signify the existence of a formal publishers' group, as it was the booksellers who orchestrated the publication, printing, and retailing of books.<sup>32</sup> Certainly there were issues to do with publishing that warranted the concerted attention of the booksellers. Practically, the inclusion in title-page imprints of large numbers of booksellers' names suggested a more convenient, generic imprint, such as the 'Company of Booksellers'.<sup>33</sup> Reverberations of the copyright issue that had such a huge bearing on the Irish book trade are also felt in the usage of the term. In the mid-eighteenth century disputes arose between booksellers in Dublin who had obtained publication rights in agreement with London booksellers who owned them and booksellers who were bent on publishing piratical copies. Either to mask the identity of the Dublin publishers in the case of unofficial printing or, as happened more commonly towards the end of the century, to protect copyright and its holders in London and Dublin, the imprint was employed for what were termed 'conger publications', or associative ventures among booksellers.<sup>34</sup> However, there was a tangible sociable and commensal dimension to the company's activities, apart from its typographical existence in imprints. Meetings of the Company of Booksellers were held in the late 1770s at which members assembled, 'clad in

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 43–5; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 21–2.

<sup>29</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 45; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 28, 145–6.

<sup>30</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 46.

<sup>31</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 124–6.

<sup>32</sup> See Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 32–5; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 168–9.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>34</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 32–3.



new suits of Irish manufacture' to underscore their commitment to native products at a time of a campaign against the importation of foreign items.<sup>35</sup> It has been suggested by James W. Phillips that the use of the imprint in the late eighteenth century indicates the beginning of a division between bookselling and publishing, as printers began to be mentioned apart from the Company of Booksellers, but it was not until the nineteenth century that distinctions between printers, publishers, and booksellers were to become pronounced.<sup>36</sup>

We have seen adumbrated in the pursuit of these sectional interests signs of increasing specialization within the Dublin heartland of the Irish print trade. Such a development was natural in an industry that had expanded substantially within the century down to 1770. In the 1760s there were approximately 350 people employed directly in the print trades in Dublin, including booksellers and stationers, printers, journeymen, apprentices, and bookbinders.<sup>37</sup> There was also a growing number of practitioners of ancillary trades, such as papermakers, engravers, toolmakers, and type-founders dependent to varying degrees on the print industry.<sup>38</sup> The redefining of relationships between the sectors was also due to the prevailing economic and cultural conditions within which the trade operated as the century progressed. The implications of government duties on materials, such as the paper that fed the presses, have already been noted. The question of the intellectual and commercial aspects of copyright bulked large throughout the period, affecting both the type of books printed off the presses and the pattern of marketing and sales of the products. Bookselling activities were also subject to the prevailing trends in commercial legislation for importing and exporting within and outside the British system. An examination of each of the areas of printing costs, copyright and printed material, and the marketing of books will help to contribute to an overview of the changing structure of the Irish print trade down to 1800.

## The Irish Printing Industry and the British Colonial System: A Creative Response

The health of the Irish printing industry when faced with a huge potential competitor centred on London depended to a great extent on its ability to control the costs of materials, labour, and overheads. Despite the complaints

<sup>35</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 168–9.

<sup>36</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 34–5.

<sup>37</sup> This figure is arrived at as follows: there were sixty-five master booksellers and irregular booksellers in Dublin in 1760 (Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 28); there were fifty-five printers in the city in the same year, including master printers, master printer–booksellers, and irregular printers (*ibid.*, 39); there were seventy journeymen–printers and 116 apprentices in Dublin in 1766 (*ibid.*, 42); and there was a total of forty-two bookbinders of all classes in Dublin in the peak year of 1768 (*ibid.*, 52–3).

<sup>38</sup> See Pollard, *Dictionary*, 641–7, for lists of practitioners of allied trades.

of sectors in the trade, especially the booksellers and bookbinders, about rising charges, sometimes in the form of government levies, the members were on the whole quite successful in keeping the price of books down to a competitive level.<sup>39</sup> The most expensive items for printers setting up in business were the presses and the fonts of type.<sup>40</sup> There was in Dublin from at least 1730 a press-making business run by James Robinson, and in the later decades of the century the city was apparently well supplied with practitioners of the craft.<sup>41</sup> All the fittings and fixtures bought for the two presses in the newly founded Dublin University Press in the late 1730s and 1740s, for example, were furnished by local craftworkers.<sup>42</sup> Despite the existence of a native type-founding industry from the early 1700s,<sup>43</sup> however, Irish printers looked to England and the Continent, particularly the Netherlands, for much of their supply of type. This was because of the fashionability first of Dutch type and later that of William Caslon, an Englishman.<sup>44</sup> To import type from England, as the proprietors of the Dublin University Press did in the 1730s, entailed the expenditure on duty and haulage of 11 per cent more than a London printer would have paid.<sup>45</sup> For Irish printers who desired to support native industry, the establishment in Dublin in 1747 of the venture of Robert Perry promised a reasonable alternative to imported type. Surviving through at least three generations, the firm of Perry raised Irish type-founding to a level of excellence recognized by the Royal Dublin Society and that attracted the custom of two major Dublin booksellers—printers, Boulton Grierson and George Faulkner.<sup>46</sup>

A paper-making industry flourished in the vicinity of Dublin but its product never enjoyed unmixed popularity with the native bookseller—printers.<sup>47</sup> Of the several Irish paper-making concerns in the eighteenth century, some indeed run by stationer—printers, that of the Slator dynasty was perhaps the most successful. Once again this native enterprise received much encouragement from the Royal Dublin Society, the Slators' paper winning many awards.<sup>48</sup> Yet the printers continued to import paper in large quantities from Genoa, France, and England throughout the century, attracted by the higher quality of the product.<sup>49</sup> Even with government duties on imported paper

<sup>39</sup> For contemporary remarks on the price of books in Dublin, see Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 110–11.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.

<sup>41</sup> See Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 217; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 497.

<sup>42</sup> Kinane, *A History of Dublin University Press*, 20–6.

<sup>43</sup> W. G. Strickland, *Typefounding in Dublin* (Dublin: Falconer, 1922); Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 197–204.

<sup>44</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 204–10; for Caslon, see Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing*, 78.

<sup>45</sup> Kinane, *A History of Dublin University Press*, 27.

<sup>46</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 199–204; for the Perry and Parker families of type-founders, see Pollard, *Dictionary*, 458–9.

<sup>47</sup> See Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 151–64.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 157–8, 160–2, 164–6.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 172–96.

from the Continent, paper was still cheaper for Dublin printers to buy than for their English counterparts for the first half of the century. Although increased duties on imported paper were imposed in 1759 in order to protect the Irish industry from foreign competition, the printers and booksellers continued to import foreign paper thereafter and the quality and quantity of Irish paper manufacturing was not really boosted.<sup>50</sup> It was not until 1795 that paper costs became critical for bookseller–printers, Parliament in that year increasing the import levy on all paper imports at a time when the French market had been closed off. The native paper industry was not able to supply the demand of the printers, and there were dire but realistic warnings of redundancies from the stationers and printers if the export market for Irish books were to collapse due to a shortage of reasonably priced, good quality paper.<sup>51</sup>

Down to the 1790s the price of books in Dublin compared favourably with that in England or elsewhere. Irish reprints of English editions sold more cheaply than the originals, and books printed in England may have been only slightly more expensive in Dublin than in London.<sup>52</sup> Irish bookseller–printers were advantaged in paying less for paper than their English counterparts for most of the century, and wages in the Dublin printing houses were slightly lower than or equal to those paid in England. Booksellers' overheads may have been lower in Dublin, but the imposition of a tax on newspaper advertisements under the stamp act of 1774 was complained of bitterly.<sup>53</sup> The real profitability of the Irish book trade in the eighteenth century lay in the production of cheap reprints of English works for which the booksellers and printers in Ireland were not obliged to pay copyright fees. These books were produced on less expensive paper, in smaller sizes such as duodecimo, and with much lower print runs than were characteristic of the English editions.<sup>54</sup> Printing by subscription was a safe way of financing a publication venture, especially when the market had been already tested by the appearance of an English edition of a book, and the evidence of subscribers' lists suggests an average of about 500 copies for a Dublin edition.<sup>55</sup> Mary Pollard's analysis of retail prices for books throughout the period has found that Dublin booksellers enjoyed a premium of up to 20 per cent over their English counterparts in terms of the cost of retailing a copy of a book in the later eighteenth century.<sup>56</sup>

The sale of cheaper Irish editions of books printed in England under copyright was an abiding grievance of London booksellers throughout the

<sup>50</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 111–15.

<sup>51</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 170–2; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 145–6.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 131–5.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 24.

<sup>54</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 115–20; R. C. Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740–1800* (London: Mansell, 1986), 1–6.

<sup>55</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 118–19.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 133–4.

eighteenth century. Not only did the failure to make applicable to the Irish print trade the terms of the Copyright Act of 1709 allow for reprints to be sold in Ireland (quite legitimately), but it also left open the possibility of their sale in England.<sup>57</sup> Not until 1739 with the passage of the Importation Act in England did it become illegal to import foreign reprints of copyright material to Britain.<sup>58</sup> Although the legislation may have curbed the open shipping of reprinted books from Ireland, there is evidence of some smuggling of forbidden books to England by Dublin booksellers and also the use of false imprints to cover the traces of piracy.<sup>59</sup> Despite their recurring complaints about breaches of the law, English booksellers were mindful of the importance of the Irish market for books printed in England. Therefore reasonably harmonious commercial relations were maintained between the Irish booksellers and their English peers, even at times of dispute. Advertisements for stock of English books appeared in Dublin newspapers, placed either by local booksellers as agents for English booksellers or directly by London booksellers.<sup>60</sup> Another aspect of the *modus vivendi* that developed in the mid- to later eighteenth century was the joint publication and selling of works, many of them by Irish authors, by booksellers in Britain and Ireland. Such ventures precluded the pirating of English editions by Irish publishers and ensured the London booksellers the rights to distribution in Britain.<sup>61</sup>

In the absence of any statutory recognition of literary property in Ireland during the eighteenth century, bookseller–printers there displayed ambivalence about the assertion of copyright in their conduct of business relations within the Irish trade.<sup>62</sup> A system whereby the posting up by a bookseller–printer of a title page as an announcement of the intention to publish or reprint a certain work was established in the earlier part of the century, and this *de facto* entitlement was amplified to include possession of the author's manuscript or of the London edition.<sup>63</sup> There was scope in the loosely applied concept of literary property for innumerable disputes among the Dublin bookselling community, some of them including the premier publisher, George Faulkner.<sup>64</sup> Early in his career he had publicly asserted that the booksellers of Ireland could not 'pretend to any property in what they publish, either by law or custom'.<sup>65</sup> Nor had the authors any rights to intellectual ownership of their works. Booksellers sometimes paid the writers modest sums for their manuscripts

<sup>57</sup> See Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth Century England*, 6–8; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 69–81.

<sup>58</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 70–2.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 74–87.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 90–2.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 92–7.

<sup>62</sup> For a discussion of the subject of literary property, see Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 103–47.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 127–30; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 169–73.

<sup>64</sup> These disputes are recounted in Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 130–47. For Faulkner's career as a bookseller–printer, see Robert E. Ward (ed.), *Prince of Dublin Printers: The Letters of George Faulkner* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1972) and Pollard, *Dictionary*, 198–205.

<sup>65</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 180.

but no authors grew rich in Ireland on the basis of their relationship with Irish booksellers and printers.<sup>66</sup> The most famous altercations involving a writer and the Irish book trade were those of Samuel Richardson with various Dublin pirates of his works, including the novel *Pamela*.<sup>67</sup> Other authors including Jonathan Swift were more sanguine about the reprinting of their works in Ireland, David Hume, for example, expressing his preference for a pirated Dublin edition of his *History* that would carry all his corrections of the copyright-protected London one.<sup>68</sup> Before new legislation to recognize ownership of literary property in Ireland was introduced at the time of the Act of Union, the publication of reprints remained the mainstay of the Irish print trade, though there was maintained a fairly healthy level of original publishing of native works.

Through the network of booksellers, stationers, merchants, and chapmen the products of the presses were distributed throughout much of the island, with Dublin and Belfast serving as nodal points.<sup>69</sup> Publicity generated by advertisements, calls for subscribers, and the drawing up of printers' catalogues created an awareness of the trends in publishing for potential book-buyers and for users of circulating libraries.<sup>70</sup> A steady internal market sustained a buoyant enough trade, but real profitability accrued from the export of cheap Irish editions of English-printed works. Whereas exportation by Irish booksellers to England was fraught with copyright implications, trade in books with the North American colonies was effectively closed to them until 1780 because of English commercial legislation of the later seventeenth century.<sup>71</sup> Some book smuggling from Ireland to North America did occur, and certain Dublin booksellers had close links with counterparts in Philadelphia and elsewhere.<sup>72</sup> Indeed eighteen Irish booksellers had migrated to North America before the American Revolution, and in all 101 transferred westwards between 1750 and 1820.<sup>73</sup> After 1780 a huge increase occurred in the export of Irish-printed books to the United States of America, and the boom in sales of printed material and stationery persisted until the mid-1790s.<sup>74</sup> There was a subsequent slump, caused not only by turbulent

<sup>66</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 177–81.

<sup>67</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 111–14; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 88–90.

<sup>68</sup> For Swift's attitude, see Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800*, 109–10; for Hume's remarks, see *ibid.*, 103. See also Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740–1800*.

<sup>69</sup> See Adams, *Printed Word and the Common Man*, 23–41.

<sup>70</sup> See Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 73–102 for the modes of publicizing and selling of books.

<sup>71</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 136–43.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 137–8; Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740–1800*, 40–53; Suzanne Rock, 'The Impact of the Stamp Act Crisis, 1765–6, in Ireland', in Joost Augusteijn and Mary Ann Lyons (eds.), *Irish History: A Research Yearbook*, 1 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 108–18.

<sup>73</sup> Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, pp. ix, 40–1.

<sup>74</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 143–9.

political conditions but also by a paper shortage in Ireland. At the height of the market in the mid-1780s there was a total of about eighty printers working in Dublin, increased from about fifty in the mid-century period, and subsiding to the same figure for 1799–1800.<sup>75</sup>

After its painfully slow evolution during the first 250 years of the era of moveable metallic type, the Irish print trade became a catalytic force in the eighteenth century. Most notably in Dublin, but progressively in Belfast and other provincial centres, the practitioners within the trade grew in professionalism, self-confidence, and sophistication. A critical mass in terms of personnel, equipment, and skill in the earlier part of the century exploded into great creativity and commercial energy in the decades down to 1800. Unshackled to any great extent by overarching guild regulation, the individual sectors of the industry organized their own internal work practices and trading policies, while interacting for the most part co-operatively with the other crafts. Although constrained within a colonial trading framework, the Irish printing fraternity proved to be resilient in marshalling its resources to produce large numbers of books and other items for internal and external sale. In particular the exploitation of the limitations of the English Copyright Act generated a hugely prosperous trade. In its successful defence of its own commercial and cultural interests, while engaging with the British and international spheres, the Irish print industry reflected the ingenuity and energy of the dynamic socio-economic elements within the country at large. The setbacks of the very last years of the century may have changed the circumstances for the marketing of books in the short term, but the foundations were laid in the eighteenth century for a large and enthusiastic readership throughout Ireland to be supplied by a well-organized and highly sophisticated print trade.

<sup>75</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 39.

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### III

## COLLECTING AND READING PRINT



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# Libraries and Collectors, 1550–1700

*Elizabethanne Boran*

What characteristics define an early modern library? Justus Lipsius, one of the earliest commentators to examine the issue, suggested two possibilities in his *De Bibliothecis* of 1602: one could define it spatially as a place where books were kept, or alternatively as the collections housed in these structures.<sup>1</sup> Whereas this bipartite definition reflects modern conceptions of libraries other early modern definitions seem strange to us today: Lipsius suggested that shops where books were sold were also libraries, and later seventeenth-century writers added yet another possibility—a ‘bibliotheque’ could comprise a compilation of books by authors on the same subject.<sup>2</sup> For contemporaries, then, defining what constituted a library was by no means obvious.

The same is true for the present-day commentator on libraries in early modern Ireland. We need to be aware that how we answer the question depends on the privileged survival rates of some sources as opposed to others. No library structure of the later sixteenth or seventeenth century survives and we are thus dependent on contemporary description of interiors and scraps of information concerning the physical arrangement of books. On the other hand, our knowledge of collections can be pieced together from material such as extant catalogues, price lists, sale catalogues, and, more generally, the correspondence of scholars.<sup>3</sup> For a number of libraries only the catalogues survive.

<sup>1</sup> Justus Lipsius, ‘A Brief Outline of the History of Libraries, 1602’, in J. C. Dana and H. W. Kent (eds.), *Literature of Libraries in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New Jersey: Metuchen, 1967), 31.

<sup>2</sup> Both Gabriel Naudé and Antoine Furetière were agreed on this usage: see Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), 65.

<sup>3</sup> For sale catalogues see *A Catalogue of Books of . . . Dr. Samuel Foley late lord bishop of Down and Connor . . . Sale will Begin on . . . 9th September* (Dublin, 1695, ESTC R228123) and *A Catalogue of Books in Several Faculties and Languages, Being the Library of that Learned and Ingenious Gentleman Thomas Scudamore, Esq. . . To be Sold by John Ware, Bookseller, by Way of Auction at Dick’s Coffee-House in Skinner-Row, Dublin. Where the Sale will begin on the 14th of November, 1698* (Dublin, 1698, ESTC R183634). The TCD archives contain a number of early seventeenth-century price lists: see for example TCD, MS 2160a nos. 10–17.

Following the pattern elsewhere in Europe, personal libraries outnumber institutional ones though the latter are the more durable of the two.<sup>4</sup> As we shall see, our knowledge of some personal libraries is dependent on their later absorption into institutional libraries, most notably the library of Trinity College, Dublin. It is clear also that the surviving personal libraries are merely the tip of an unchartable iceberg since we have references to libraries for which we no longer have either catalogues or the books themselves. One reason for this is that personal libraries run the risk of being broken up on the death of the original collector. Indeed, many times books were viewed by relatives and friends alike as commodities, and in one case of 1672 the library of a gentleman was put up for auction to pay his gambling debts.<sup>5</sup> More tellingly, contemporary accounts of wars in Ireland suggest that many libraries were destroyed in the skirmishes and battles that dominate the period. Our only knowledge of the library of George Montgomery, Bishop of Derry, Raphoe, and Clogher, which reputedly contained 2,000 books, is a reference to its being burnt by the forces of Sir Cahir O'Doherty, who sacked Derry in 1608.<sup>6</sup> This may have been an isolated incident but was to prove prophetic of the fate of a number of other ecclesiastical libraries of Church of Ireland bishops during the 1641 rebellion. In that year William Chappel, Bishop of Cork and Ross, lost his library to the sea during his flight to England, and Dr Faithful Teate, at that time a minister in County Cavan, had the unpleasant experience of having his library burnt by insurgents.<sup>7</sup>

Even the library of the famous James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh from 1625 to 1656, was under threat in Drogheda. In the words of his chaplain and later biographer Nicholas Bernard, it was announced by the besieging rebels

That they would make a Bonfire of my Lord Primate's Library, rejoicing to think how they should warm their Hands by it taking what Revenge they could on it, seeing he was too far out of their Reach himself; one Friar Walsh adding this for a Cause, in regard those Books had been an Instrument whereby his Writing and Doctrine he had damned more Souls than now were living.<sup>8</sup>

Bernard drew comparisons between the 'civilised' behaviour of the Protestant garrison who sold off the library of Viscount Marlinton at cheap rates rather than destroy it, and the more destructive tendencies of the insurgents:

but if they found a Bible of ours in *English*, how basely would they use it. Burning was the best End that came to all they laid Hands on, as the like was the Destiny of all

<sup>4</sup> See Ladislaus Buzas, *German Library History, 800–1945*, trans. William D. Boyd (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1986), 221–40.

<sup>5</sup> Marcus Mac Enery, 'A Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Irish Library', *Irish Book Lover* 30 (1946–7), 30–4.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Cotton, *Fasti Ecclesiae Hiberniae*, 5 vols. (Dublin: Hodges Smith, 1849), iii. 350.

<sup>7</sup> Constantia Maxwell, *A History of Trinity College, Dublin 1591–1892* (Dublin: University Press, 1946), 67.

<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Bernard, *The Whole Proceedings of the Siege of Drogheda in Ireland* (Dublin, 1736, ESTC T217465), 96.

other Books of that Nature, with which some of the Owners were more grieved than for the loss of their Goods.<sup>9</sup>

Bernard may well be exaggerating here. Not all libraries were burnt and in a number of high-profile cases plunder rather than destruction was the obvious aim. Such was the fate of the library of Henry Tilson, Bishop of Elphin, whereas Anthony Martin, Bishop of Meath, lost £400 worth of books and Henry Leslie of Down and Connor £200 more.<sup>10</sup> The Williamite war later in the century was likewise the cause of yet more bibliographical outrages—the library of John Lesley, Bishop of Clogher, was destroyed ‘partly by the Irish and partly by King William’s army’.<sup>11</sup>

Bearing these factors in mind we can view the surviving collections in a more judicious light. It is clear that libraries of professional groups dominate and of these clerical and scholarly libraries form the most important subgroup of the personal libraries available. The library of James Ussher is the most famous of all the scholarly collections but it is clear that later bishops were also eager to establish collections, some of which would form the basis of institutional libraries.<sup>12</sup> The first of these cathedral libraries, at Kilkenny in 1693, was the result of a benefaction by Thomas Otway, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Ossory who bequeathed his collection and £200 ‘for the beginning of a library for the Cathedral Church of St Canice, for the use of the clergy about it’.<sup>13</sup> On his accession to the archbishopric of Dublin William King, the former Bishop of Derry, purchased the library of his seventeenth-century predecessor, Ezekiel Hopkins, and donated the books to the diocese.<sup>14</sup> This development in cathedral libraries is much later than the movement in England though it should be said that there were attempts in the early seventeenth century to develop such institutional libraries.<sup>15</sup> For example, we find in the Chapter Book of St Finbarre’s Cathedral in Cork that Richard Owen, a prebendary of Kilnaglory, ‘presented towards the erection of a library in the Cathedral church £20’ on 4 November 1629.<sup>16</sup> Owen arranged that he would have the use of the library during his lifetime and that on his death it would be continued for the benefit of his fellow prebendaries.

The pedagogical functions of these cathedral libraries is clear, indeed quite tangibly so in the Kilkenny case where Otway’s will suggested the site of the

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 105. For the fate of Marlington’s library see *ibid.*, 76.

<sup>10</sup> Cotton, *Fasti*, iv. 126, and v. 222 and 235.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., iii. 79.

<sup>12</sup> TCD, MS 6 is a catalogue of Ussher’s library after it arrived in TCD. For Ussher’s library prior to this see Elizabethanne Boran, ‘The Libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, 1595–1608’, in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter-Reformation* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 75–115, and H. J. Lawlor, ‘Primate Ussher’s Library before 1641’, *PRIA*, 22C (1900), 216–64.

<sup>13</sup> David Woodworth, ‘St. Canice’s Library’, *Old Kilkenny Review*, 23 (1971), 18.

<sup>14</sup> R. S. Matteson, ‘Archbishop William King and the Conception of his Library’, *The Library*, 13 (1991), 253.

<sup>15</sup> N. R. Ker, ‘Cathedral Libraries’, *Library History*, 1 no. 2 (1967), 38–45.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Caulfield, *Annals of St Finbarre’s Cathedral, Cork* (Cork: Purcell and Co., 1871), 21.

old grammar school of the earls of Ormond as a suitable spot for his library.<sup>17</sup> It was pedagogy in the clerical sense, for the use and benefit of the younger clerics who, unlike their ecclesiastical superiors, might not be able to afford a well-equipped library. Unfortunately for us, smaller libraries of lesser clerics had a shorter lifespan and were no doubt sold by their families following the demise of the original owner. We can, however, get some indication of their nature by examining the advice given to young ministers by senior clerics such as William King, the early-eighteenth-century Archbishop of Dublin, and James Ussher, both of whom displayed an acute awareness of the need to encourage and guide the reading and library formation of young pastors. Ussher's 'Directions' was evidently written in the late 1630s to provide practical advice on the basic texts necessary for a minister, once he had left university and taken up his ecclesiastical position.<sup>18</sup> Ussher advised the minister to concentrate on the foundations of the faith: scriptural readings and biblical exegesis (on a level that the community might understand). Emphasis was laid on aids for the preacher: the psalms are highlighted for their appeal to the congregation and their applicability in any situation; commonplace books are advocated as models for the creation of the preacher's own personal notes. The chief focus is on works on practical divinity and the list includes texts by authors such as Robert Rollock and William Perkins, both popular authors who addressed the issues that most attracted lay enquiry.<sup>19</sup> Doctrinal works, particularly those dealing with controversy with Roman Catholics, have little place here. Instead the reader is urged to 'use only Whitaker and Chamier'.<sup>20</sup> The list of 'approved books' reflects the overall conservatism of the advice on offer: authors such as John Calvin, Theodore Beza, Thomas Cartwright, William Fulke, and Richard Greenham hold pride of place.<sup>21</sup>

King's correspondence on the topic with the Bishop of Waterford, Nathaniel Foy, offers an interesting counterpart to Ussher's earlier instructions. Whereas Ussher's 'Directions' counselled the young cleric to avoid controversy and concentrate on pastoral concerns, King urges an investigation of

<sup>17</sup> Woodworth, 'St. Canice's Library', 15.

<sup>18</sup> Queen's College, Oxford, MS 217, ff. 41v–42v. For a discussion of the implications of this document see Elizabethanne Boran, 'Reading Theology within the Community of Believers: James Ussher's "Directions"', in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 39–59.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Rollock (1552–99), first principal of the University of Edinburgh, *DNB*; William Perkins (1558–1602), theological writer, *DNB*.

<sup>20</sup> Queen's College, Oxford, MS 217, f. 41v. William Whitaker (1548–95), Master of St John's College, Cambridge, *DNB*; Daniel Chamier (1565–1621), Professor of Theology at Montaubon, *Biographie Universelle*.

<sup>21</sup> Queen's College, Oxford, MS 217, f. 42r. The inclusion of works by well-known late-sixteenth-century Puritans such as Cartwright, Fulke, and Greenham illustrates the longevity of their influence and Ussher's continuing positive appraisal of their utility.

the Church Fathers, a subject Ussher had felt might best be examined in a university setting.<sup>22</sup> Although none of the sample catalogues mentioned by Foy and King are extant we can get some flavour of the type of works they thought useful for a library of a young cleric in a letter from Foy to King, of 19 May 1693.<sup>23</sup> Here Foy refers to doctrinal works by William Palliser though Peter Allix's treatise on church councils, coupled with a history of the Reformation, indicates the increasing emphasis laid on church history as a requirement for ministers.<sup>24</sup> All these works, with one exception, later featured in King's own library.<sup>25</sup>

Admittedly King was both prepared to spend far more on his collection, and had the means to do so, but he and Foy were agreed that even a young curate should at least be thinking of spending roughly 10 per cent of his annual income on his library.<sup>26</sup> King was well aware that financial considerations would inevitably play a part in the growth and scope of clerical libraries. He was therefore concerned to draw attention to possible gaps in collections: ministers, in his view, needed to be conversant with church history, whereas for bishops he advocated a thorough grounding in canon law as a necessary prerequisite for a learned episcopate. The multidisciplinary nature of King's own library was thus not a result of indiscriminate buying. He was concerned to make available works that would be of benefit to other clerics. For King, the provision of clerical libraries was a *sine qua non* for a healthy, vibrant church. It was for this reason that he applied himself to suggesting suitable bibliographical guides to other clergymen and it was for the same reason that he built up his own library.<sup>27</sup>

Of those clerical libraries that survive the majority belong to bishops or archbishops of the Church of Ireland. Our information concerning libraries of the Roman Catholic clergy is even more sparse as a result of the political difficulties faced by the Catholic Church in Ireland and the necessarily clandestine nature of any such collections. A useful counterpart to the Church of Ireland collections mentioned earlier are two libraries of 'Counter-Reformation' prelates: Luke Wadding, Bishop of Ferns (1684–91), and Piers Creagh, Bishop of Cork from 1676 to 1692 and Archbishop of Dublin from

<sup>22</sup> For King's deliberations on the issue see Matteson, 'King', 238–9. On the same subject see Colin McKelvie's 'Jeremy Taylor's Recommendations for a Library of Anglican Theology (1660)', *Irish Booklore*, 4 (1980), 96–103.

<sup>23</sup> Matteson, 'King', 239.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. William Palliser (1646–1726), Archbishop of Cashel, *DNB*; Peter Allix, D.D. (1641–1717), preacher and theologian, *DNB*.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 252. King advocated the use of bibliographical guides by authors as diverse as Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Cologne, 1617?); Sisto da Siena, *Bibliotheca Selecta de Ratione Studiorum* (Cologne, 1626); William Cave, *Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus* (London, 1685, ESTC R13826); and Thomas Bray, *Bibliotheca parochialis* (London, 1697, ESTC R9382, R175576). See also Matteson, 'King', 243.

1692 to his death in 1705.<sup>28</sup> The extensive library left by Wadding in both Wexford and New Ross in 1686 not only reflects his distrust of Jansenism but also his preoccupation with the writings of Pierre du Camus (1584–1652), Bishop of Belley, as well as his interest in contemporary accounts of the 1678 ‘Popish Plot’. The list, which includes almost seven hundred works in all, is divided into various sections, most of which are subdivided into format categories and have attached prices. The majority are lists of books left in Wexford and New Ross in 1686 but other sections are equally interesting: the ‘French bookes of Messire Pierre Camus Evesque et Signeur de Bellay’ (twenty-nine items); ‘A memoire of some pamphlets of Mr Lestrenge and others from the year 1678’ (27 items)—which includes, among other things, Roger L’Estrange’s *Tyranny and popery lording it* (London, 1678); trials of Jesuits (8 items); books bought in 1686; and, finally, ‘Bookes given and bestowed on Relations, Friends, benefactors, poore Gentry and widdowes, children etc from the yeere 1668 I came to Ireland till the 1687 which I hope some did good.’ This constellation of book lists, some general, others very specific, provides us with a vital insight into the collection habits and interests of this Counter-Reformation prelate. Above all it reminds us that libraries are not static entities but are subject to the ebb and flow of a collector’s interests and circumstances.

There are some similarities with Creagh’s library of 1676, not least the emphasis both placed on collecting works by Jesuit authors.<sup>29</sup> Creagh’s collection not only reflects his fascination for theology and hagiography but also indicates a dominant interest in Greek and Latin poetry, prose, and aphorisms, by authors such as Plutarch, Homer, Demosthenes, and Marcus Aurelius. Likewise, the writings of ancient authors such as Josephus, and Livy, along with more contemporary church historians such as Caesar Baronius, form an important section. His theological books demonstrate a marked interest in works of canon law, hardly surprising given his ecclesiastical career in Rome and Ireland.

Canice Mooney’s seminal article on the library of Piers Creagh offers us a useful counterpoint to our investigation of Church of Ireland libraries. Having studied at Poitiers, Creagh returned to Ireland in 1667 as a missionary. However, within four years he was appointed by the Irish bishops as their agent in Rome and he remained there until his accession to the bishopric of Cork in 1676. From 1676 to 1685 he was in Ireland but the political developments of that year forced him to leave for France where he remained for the rest of his life. His library catalogue, though written by Edmond Everard in

<sup>28</sup> P. J. Corish, ‘Bishop Luke Wadding’s Notebook’, *Archivium Hibernicum*, 29 (1970), 49–113, and Canice Mooney, ‘The Library of Archbishop Piers Creagh’, *Repertorium Novum*, 1 (pt. 1) (1953), 117–39.

<sup>29</sup> Corish, ‘Wadding’, 53; Mooney, ‘Creagh’, 138.

1721, is actually a receipt for books left by Creagh in St Isidore's in Rome on his departure for Cork in 1676, and therefore relates to his years in Rome rather than his earlier mission in Ireland.<sup>30</sup> Indeed it survived solely because he decided to place his collection in the safekeeping of St Isidore's in Rome prior to leaving for Cork. In that sense one might call it a continental rather than an Irish library of the Catholic reformation. As such it reminds us that Irish libraries should not solely be defined in the context of developments within the British Isles. Given that the early-seventeenth-century monopoly of the Dublin press by the Protestant authorities ensured that works collected by Roman Catholics in Ireland had to be printed in recusant centres such as Douai, Brussels, Salamanca, and Rome, and that Irish Catholics themselves sought refuge in these centres of recusant education, we would do well to consider this element of the early modern Irish library more closely. More work needs to be done on this continental context of the libraries of Irish Roman Catholics but the editions of the library lists of Creagh and Wadding by Mooney and Corish provide convenient models for this investigation.

Creagh's catalogue, with its emphasis on classical works such as that of the Roman historian Lucius Florus, reflects a trend in all theological libraries since in most cases the libraries had been started when the clerics were at university and studying the humanities.<sup>31</sup> Indeed this is a tendency found in all catalogues though it is perhaps most obvious in a number of gentry/noble libraries: an early-sixteenth-century library catalogue of the earls of Kildare; the 1643 collection of Edward, second Viscount Conway of Killultagh; and the 1672 library of Robert Taylor of Ballinort.<sup>32</sup> The two library catalogues listed in the 'Kildare Rental' book drawn up by the ninth Earl, Gerald FitzGerald (1487–1534), are small but intriguing collections. The list at the end of the volume is undated but the other is far more precise: 'Bokes remaining in the lyberary of Geralde fitzGeralde earle of Kyldare the 15 day of Februarii anno Henrici VIII 190 [1526]' (ninety-two items).<sup>33</sup> A comparison of the two reveals that the 1526 collection is a later version of the earlier list, which may possibly be dated as early as 1518, the date FitzGerald commenced his book.<sup>34</sup> We can therefore witness the growth of the collection—with the addition of works such as Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, but also the subtraction of others.

<sup>30</sup> This is apparent in the title: 'Inventario dei libri e d'altra robba lasciati nell'anno 1676 al convento di S. Isidoro in deposito dal R.mo e Illus.m Sgr. Pietro Creveo, vescovo di Cork'.

<sup>31</sup> Mooney, 'Creagh', 126. On the importance of Florus in the early-seventeenth-century history curriculum see Mordechai Feingold, 'The Humanities', in Nicholas Tyacke (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford, IV. Seventeenth Century Oxford* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 351.

<sup>32</sup> Mac Enery, 'A Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Irish Library', 30–4.

<sup>33</sup> Gearóid Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Crown Surveys of Lands 1540–41* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992), 312.

<sup>34</sup> The two lists may be found at the following page numbers: undated 355–6; [1526] 312–14. The 1526 list copies the structure of the basic undated list but includes many more works.



In the early list there is a whole section devoted to saints' lives in Irish; yet none of these are mentioned in the 1526 catalogue—thus presenting us with a far more worldly view of the Earl than the earlier catalogue would suggest.<sup>35</sup> The preponderance of chronicles and history reveals a clear humanist emphasis.

Taylor's small library was less dependent on chronicles but included works by most of the popular Roman historians along with a copy of Shakespeare's plays. Conway's collection, compiled four decades earlier, was far more extensive (approximately 6,000 volumes).<sup>36</sup> Ironically we owe our knowledge of it to an inventory of the contents drawn up on its seizure by the Committee of Sequestrations in 1643, the year when Conway was declared a 'delinquent'.<sup>37</sup> Unusually, it contained a relatively large section of novels and plays in French, Spanish, and Italian, many of them burlesque, which Conway evidently collected assiduously, judging from his comments in a letter to Sir Theodore de Mayerne in 1651.<sup>38</sup> The multilingual nature of Conway's library mirrors that of the 1518/26 catalogue of Gerald FitzGerald. Given its earlier date the ninth Earl's library was far smaller than Conway's but the Earl's books were divided among Latin, English, French, and (in the earlier catalogue) Irish works. FitzGerald's interest in chivalric romances might seem to prefigure Conway's interest in drama but the relatively large collection of hagiography in Irish was a far remove from the burlesque plays of the mid-seventeenth-century library of the Viscount of Killultagh.<sup>39</sup>

An associate of Conway's, Sir Jerome Alexander, was responsible for collecting one of the few legal libraries of the period. His library, bequeathed to Trinity College, Dublin, in 1670, and Christopher Sexton's early-seventeenth-century catalogue from Limerick are the only libraries belonging to lawyers that survive.<sup>40</sup> A comparison of the two demonstrates that by the latter part of the seventeenth century there was an increasing tendency among collectors to specialize in collecting their own subject area. Of the 588 works mentioned by Alexander less than half are non-legal works covering such subjects as rhetoric (and its related discipline of history), politics, and theological works including interchurch controversies and sermon collections. However, these

<sup>35</sup> The absence of these works remains to be explained. It may simply reflect a temporary absence from the library at the time of cataloguing or, given their hagiographical nature, the Earl may have decided to donate them to a monastery.

<sup>36</sup> W. G. Wheeler, 'Libraries in Ireland before 1855. A Bibliographical Essay', University of London Diploma in Librarianship (1957), 41.

<sup>37</sup> H. R. Plomer, 'A Cavalier's Library', *The Library*, n.s. 5 (1904), 158–72. Wheeler, 'Libraries', 42, suggests that Armagh Public Library, MS g. III. 15 is a catalogue of the Viscount's library c. 1633.

<sup>38</sup> Plomer, 'A Cavalier's Library', 170.

<sup>39</sup> Mac Niocaill, *Crown Surveys of Lands 1540–41*, 355–6.

<sup>40</sup> Alexander's collection is in the library of TCD. A 1675 manuscript catalogue of it is TCD, MS MUN/LIB/10/18, f. 11–9r. For Sexton's library see BL, Add. MS 19865, ff. 74–8.

works are overshadowed by the preponderance of legal texts covering every practical aspect of the law. This trend in specialization was mirrored by another disparity between these two legal libraries: Alexander evinced a far greater interest in collecting rarities.

The library of Christopher Sexton, a Protestant lawyer in Limerick in the 1620s, also serves as a useful foil to the medical catalogue of the Catholic Dr Thomas Arthur of the same city.<sup>41</sup> Although both included books that had been collected during their days as undergraduates, Arthur's catalogue was a far more specialized affair than that of Sexton. The preponderance of works by Galen among Arthur's books reminds us of that author's continuing appeal, despite the challenge to his authority launched by Paracelsus. Though eschewing a Paracelsian theme Arthur was evidently interested in 'chemistry' but with a decidedly magical flavour to it, as the inclusion of works by Raymond Lull and Giovanni Baptista Porta suggest.

It is noteworthy that of the libraries that I have been discussing, the only ones that survive beyond a mere reference or the existence of a library catalogue are precisely those libraries that were later subsumed into institutional libraries of the period. Otway's library formed the basis of the cathedral library of St Canice's Kilkenny, which survives, in one form or other, as a collection to the present day. So too does Alexander's collection primarily because he bequeathed his library to Trinity College, Dublin. Equally, the massive Ussher library probably owes its continued existence as an entity to its purchase by Cromwell and Charles II's donation of it to the Dublin college.<sup>42</sup> This is one area of interaction between the personal and the institutional but it is by no means the only one. The libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, dating respectively from 1595 and 1608, augmented the collections available in Trinity College. Ussher and Challenor were the principal book-buyers of the new institutional library and it is clear that they not only ensured that there would be as little overlap between their own personal collections and that of the College, but that they also did their best to determine the growth of the various collections in each of the subjects that would be taught in the developing college.<sup>43</sup>

There is another reason we would do well to question the usefulness of the terms 'private' and 'personal' in an early modern context. These 'personal' libraries were collected by individuals and demonstrate their own interests in many cases but they were also utilized by a communal group. King's decision to purchase Hopkins's library for the benefit of the Derry clergy, Otway's gift of his own library to the clergy of Kilkenny, and Owen's decision to bequeath

<sup>41</sup> BL, Add. MS 31885, ff. 8–14.

<sup>42</sup> For the circumstances of its arrival in TCD see Toby Barnard, 'The Purchase of Archbishop Ussher's Library in 1657', *Long Room*, 4 (1971), 9–14.

<sup>43</sup> See Boran, 'Libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher', 114–15.

his library for the use of his fellow prebendaries in Cork should not be seen as acts initiating the communal use of these libraries. Rather it is abundantly clear that libraries were shared between different groups. This can be clearly seen in the new attitude to court libraries of the early modern period but equally one can see this particular development among scholarly circles, where there is a constant interchange of books and manuscripts between readers.<sup>44</sup> In the Republic of Letters libraries were to be used by scholarly friendship networks. They were, by their very nature, public entities.

'Public utility' as a vital function of early modern libraries was a concept fast gaining support throughout Europe and can be seen in the various declarations concerning the library of Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>45</sup> Equally, the related function of the library to be as comprehensive as possible explains the growth in size of collections throughout the period, as well as their scope. New English settlers and Anglo-Irish prelates viewed their libraries as mirrors of their ethnic and religious identity. The institutional library of Trinity College was meant to act as an agent of 'civility' and as an arsenal in the confessional disputes of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. In this it mirrored the function of the many 'private' libraries of the period.

In effect these libraries, whether they be 'public' or 'private', were seen to be essential agents of cultural mobilization. The warfare might be spiritual rather than physical but was nonetheless perceived to be central to both the good of the individual and the welfare of the state. We see this polemical function of the early modern library in the methodology of Thomas James, the first librarian of the Bodleian, who advocated the use of the *Vatican Index* of prohibited books as a guide to collecting works, on the basis that if the Curia did not want a book to be read, it was likely that it would be useful to a Protestant divine.<sup>46</sup> By their actions Ussher and Challoner demonstrated their agreement with this interpretation.

This theme of cultural mobilization for spiritual warfare is likewise apparent in trends in manuscript collecting during the period. In England both John Bale and John Dee had been among the first to recognize the unforeseen educational catastrophe that was a by-product of the dissolution of the monasteries, and among the scholarly community in England and Ireland

<sup>44</sup> For extended access to court libraries see Jan Pirozynski, 'Royal Book Collecting in Poland during the Renaissance', *Libraries and Culture. A Journal of Library History*, 247 (1) (1989), 21–32, and Stewart Saunders, 'Public Administration and the Library of Jean-Baptiste Colbert', *Libraries and Culture. A Journal of Library History*, 26 (2) (1991), 283–99. Wolfgang Schmitz has a discussion of the rise of the court libraries in his *Deutsche Bibliotheksgeschichte* (Bern: Germanistische Lehrbuchsammlung, 52, 1984), 76–88.

<sup>45</sup> Elizabethanne Boran, 'The Function of the Library', in Vincent Kinane and Anne Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library, Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 39–52.

<sup>46</sup> R. W. Clement, 'Librarianship and Polemics: The Career of Thomas James (1572–1629)', *Libraries and Culture: A Journal of Library History*, 26 (2) (1991), 269–83.

there was a concerted effort to salvage manuscripts from the wreckage.<sup>47</sup> In Ireland this salvage operation continued in a piecemeal fashion during the latter half of the sixteenth century but the beginning of the seventeenth century witnessed a spurt in activity.

Manuscripts of Irish history were particularly prized by both denominations: George Carew, President of Munster from 1600 to 1603, collected a number of such manuscripts, now in both Lambeth Palace Library and the Bodleian, while Geoffrey Keating utilized numerous texts for his history of pre-Norman Ireland, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*.<sup>48</sup> Ussher, though obviously more interested in other areas, still collected a number of manuscripts in Irish, notably breviaries of monasteries within the Pale.<sup>49</sup> His colleague, James Ware, was a more assiduous collector of Irish sources. A note of 1625 indicated that already by this stage Ware was the proud possessor of manuscripts such as The Annals of Inishfallen Abbey and the Register of St. Mary's Abbey, to name but the most famous.<sup>50</sup> In 1648 Ware produced a printed catalogue of his manuscript collection—surely an indication of the importance of this section of his library. Again we are reminded of the 'communal' use of these collections by a note made by Ware concerning the distribution of sixteen copies, designed to acquaint his friendship circle with the scope of his collection:

MS Catalogue of MSS was printed 19 July 1648 of which I disposed: In England: the lo. Primate [James Ussher] 1. sent by Col. Willoughby 21 July; Mr. John Selden 1; Mr. Tho. Whitaker 1. sent by Mr. Redams [?] 21 July; Sir Tho. Stafford 1. sent by Laud [?] the apothecary 22 July. In Ireland: The Bishop of Meth [Anthony Martin] 1; The Bp. of Clogher [Henry Jones] 1; The Bp. of Killaloe [Edward Parry] 1; Mr. Deane [Robert] Parry 1; Doctor Ware [probably Ware's brother, the Archdeacon of Meath] 1; Mr. Edward Crofton [probably Ware's son-in-law] 1; my son James 1; The lo. Archbp. Of Dublin [Lancelot Bulkeley]; Dr. Ambrose Aungier [chancellor of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin] 1; Bp. of Limerick [Robert Sibthorp] 1; Bp. of Kildare [William Golborne]; Doctor Dudley Loftus 1.<sup>51</sup>

Of the ninety-three manuscripts listed, many covered the ecclesiastical history of the medieval Irish church, manuscripts that would later form the backbone of Ware's numerous and highly influential printed works on Irish history.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>47</sup> John Bale (1495–1563), Bishop of Ossory, *DNB*. See Thomas Gataker's view of Bale quoted in Thomas Fuller's *Abel Redevivus* (London, 1651, ESTC R177335), 506. John Dee (1527–1608), mathematician and astrologer, *DNB*. For his collection of books and manuscripts see Julian Roberts and Andrew G. Watson (eds.), *John Dee's Library Catalogue* (London, 1990).

<sup>48</sup> See Bernadette Cunningham's *The World of Geoffrey Keating. History, Myth and Religion in Seventeenth Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000) for a detailed investigation of Keating's methodology.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, TCD, MSS 79 and 97.

<sup>50</sup> TCD, MS 6404, f. 16v.

<sup>51</sup> William O'Sullivan, 'A Finding List of Sir James Ware's manuscripts', *PRIA*, 97C (1997), 84.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 69–99.

Catholic historians were equally fascinated by the appeal of the manuscript heritage and were even more conscious of the cultural cataclysm that might result from the destruction of the Irish past. Michael Ó Cléirigh, compiler of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, praised his patron, Fearghal Ó Gadhra, lord of Magh Ui Gadhra and Cuil O-bh-Finn, for his perceptiveness in seeing the importance of the project of manuscript retrieval on which he was embarking—and for financing it.<sup>53</sup>

It was a costly business. In his dedication to Ó Gadhra Ó Cléirigh refers to the team of scholars who had contributed to the project. He tells us that he had discussed with his patron how he ‘could get the assistance of the chroniclers for whom I had most esteem in writing a book of annals in which these matters might be put on record’.<sup>54</sup> Inherent in this comment is the realization that such a project was impossible unless it had a sound financial backing—and luckily monetary contributions were forthcoming. Indeed Ó Cléirigh sensibly drew attention to this by praising both Ó Gadhra and the Franciscan convents for supporting the work: ‘It was you who gave the reward of their labours to the chroniclers by whom it [the *Book of the Annals*] was written; and it was the friars of the convent of Donegal who supplied them with food and attendance in like manner.’<sup>55</sup>

The Franciscan order, by their support of Ó Cléirigh’s work, demonstrated an avid interest in the preservation of the manuscript heritage. They not only facilitated his project by accommodating him in their various friaries but also gave him official approbation. Fr Valentine Browne, the Provincial, wrote to Ó Cléirigh in May 1632 praising his work and declared himself anxious ‘lest we might not appear to second your work, which is so virtuous’.<sup>56</sup> As a tangible example of their support they stockpiled manuscripts from other friaries in Bundrowes in Donegal, where Ó Cléirigh was working. He gives us a list that includes the *Book of Clonmacnoise*, the *book of the Island of Saints*, in Loch Ribh; the *Annals of Senat Mac Magnus*, on the Lake of Erne (now called the *Ulster Annals*); the *Book of Ó Maoilchonaire*; and the *Annals of Kilronan*, compiled by the O’Duigenans.<sup>57</sup> John Colgan’s manuscript source list in his *Acta Sanctorum* is even more extensive—fourteen vellums in Irish and over a hundred other manuscripts, many of which eventually ended up in St Isidore’s in Rome when Luke Wadding was writing his history of the Franciscan order.<sup>58</sup> The latter and his associate David Rothe, Bishop of Ossory, were likewise dedicated collectors of medieval manuscripts.

<sup>53</sup> John O’Donovan (ed.), *The Four Masters, Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland from the Earliest Times to the Year 1616*, 2nd edn. (Dublin: Hodges Smith, 1856; rpt. Dublin, 1990).

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, lvi.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, lviii.

<sup>56</sup> Brendan Jennings, *Michael O’Cleirigh. Chief of the Four Masters and His Associates* (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1936), 135.

<sup>57</sup> *The Four Masters*, i, xiv–lxv.

<sup>58</sup> John Colgan, *The ‘Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae’ of John Colgan, Reproduced at the Ordnance Survey, Dublin, with an introduction by Brendan Jennings* (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 1948).

Ussher might have displayed little interest in collecting Gaelic works of Irish history but he evidently was extremely interested in amassing as much material on Irish history in other languages as was possible. Indeed, aware that Sir George Carew had collected a large amount of material of Irish interest, he attempted to persuade him to leave his collection to Trinity College, Dublin. Unfortunately, as Archibald Hamilton related to him in April 1629, 'whatsoever the good man intended or whatsoever direction he gave I cannot learn, but the College is not like to get them'.<sup>59</sup> Manuscripts of non-Irish interest were also prized. The first half of the seventeenth century witnessed a vogue for collecting oriental works. In England the library of Erpenius was purchased for Cambridge University Library by the Duke of Buckingham and William Laud as Chancellor of Oxford contributed Arabic manuscripts. Ussher continued this trend in his own collection and eagerly sought out manuscripts in Syriac, Ethiopian, and Aramaic in a humanist and theological drive to amass as many of the primary sources as possible. Clearly his chief interest lay in the area of biblical chronology and church history but like many other clerics he also considered science as a crucial element in any learned library. It was no doubt with this in mind that he corresponded with John Bainbridge, the first Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, who was anxious to consult the works of John Dee that Ussher had acquired.<sup>60</sup> Just as Archbishop Laud had used his ecclesiastical resources to build up the Bodleian's collections of oriental manuscripts, Ussher utilized the same *modus operandi*: 'His expences for Books was very great, especially whilst he enjoyed the revenues of his archbishoprick, a certain part whereof he laid aside yearly for that end, but especially for the purchasing of Manuscripts and other Rarities, as well from remote parts of the world, as near at hand.'<sup>61</sup>

It is worthwhile considering the rationale behind this assiduous manuscript collecting by both Catholics and Protestants. Above all one can see the *amor sciendi* displaying itself in all its glory, its most notable manifestation being in the cross-denominational collaborations among Ussher, Rothe, and Wadding in their search for manuscripts.<sup>62</sup> However, whereas all might agree on the need to preserve manuscripts it was equally clear that their use might also have a polemical function. Ó Cléirigh's dedication to Ó Gadhra is illuminating:

it seemed to you a cause of pity and regret, grief and sorrow (for the glory of God and the honour of Ireland) how much the race of Gaedhal, the son of Niul, have passed

<sup>59</sup> C. E. Elrington and J. H. Todd (eds.), *The Whole Works of the Most Rev. James Ussher*, 17 vols. (Dublin, 1847–64), (hereafter *U.W.*), xv. 434. <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.

<sup>61</sup> Samuel Clarke, *A Collection of the Lives of Ten eminent divines* (London, 1662, ESTC R13987), 203.

<sup>62</sup> William O'Sullivan, 'Correspondence of David Rothe and James Ussher', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 36–7 (1994–5), 7–49.

under a cloud and darkness, without a knowledge and record of the death or obit of saint or virgin, archbishop, bishop, abbot, or other noble dignitary of the Church, or king or of prince, of lord or of chieftain, or of the synchronism or connexion of the one with the other.<sup>63</sup>

Here we see the classic linkage between Church and State, a bond that was not to be left to the realm of memory alone but was to be reactivated once its foundations were uncovered. Ó Cléirigh and his fellow Franciscans uncovered the history of ‘the race of Gaedhal’ in a polemical attempt to remind their patrons of past successes and claims. Inherent within such works was the suggestion that what had been might be again. Colgan, in his preface to his readers, drew attention to the ‘perseverance and constancy’ of early saints, characteristics which he no doubt hoped would imbue seventeenth-century missions to Ireland.<sup>64</sup> Ussher used similar sources for a different end, not to exhort his reader to emulation but rather to create a history for the Church of Ireland, to highlight its descent from the early church.<sup>65</sup> This would not only add to its sense of its own legitimacy but might also help convert the Old English to Protestantism.

Ussher’s correspondence gives us ample evidence of the collaborative nature of manuscript and printed book collecting in early modern Ireland.<sup>66</sup> At all times it reminds us that Ussher was working within a very wide-ranging friendship network, one that initially centred on his contacts within the British Isles but that eventually spread across the rest of Europe in a search for information and texts. One of Ussher’s most important conduits was Sir Robert Cotton, who acted as an intellectual entrepôt for scholars who were particularly interested in early and medieval church history. It was from Cotton that Ussher borrowed such works as Wyclif’s *Homilies* and numerous Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, and in turn gave him his Samaritan Pentateuch.<sup>67</sup> Other scholarly contacts provided valuable news about which books were being printed, where manuscripts might be found, and whose library would currently be on the market. Ussher’s friend Henry Bourchier gives us an amusing example of the ‘ambulance chasing’ mentality of the early-seventeenth-century book world:

Here will be very shortly some good libraries to be had; as Dr Dee’s, which hath been long litigious, and by that means unsold. One Oliver, a physician of St. Edmundsbury, of whose writing I have seen some mathematical tracts printed, and Dr. Crakanthorp, are lately dead. If there be any extraordinary books which your lordship affects, if you will be pleased to send a note of them, they shall be bought.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *The Four Masters*, lvi.

<sup>64</sup> Colgan, *Acta*, Preface to the Reader.

<sup>65</sup> James Ussher, *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British* (London, 1631, ESTC S118950).

<sup>66</sup> *U.W.*, xv and xvi.

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, *U.W.*, xv. 18. Wyclif’s ‘Homilies’ is now TCD, MS 244.

<sup>68</sup> *U.W.*, xv. 227.

Bourchier provided vital information concerning printing in England and continental Europe and was ever anxious to provide his erstwhile patron with any text he might desire. Ussher and his contemporaries did not, however, rely solely on the goodwill of their friends but also employed agents in centres of printing to collect works for them. Ussher's correspondence with Thomas Davies is famous in this regard, outlining as it does the inherent difficulties faced by Davies as Ussher's factor in the Levant: the time delay between receiving instructions from Ussher and being able to locate manuscripts, the cost of such manuscripts, and the variable nature of political relations that might affect access to monastic repositories of manuscripts.<sup>69</sup> Undoubtedly only the most avid of collectors could afford such a luxury but men like Ussher and King saw the benefits that might accrue from such initiatives. Friends and factors were not the only aids to early modern Irish bibliophiles. We have ample evidence in both Ussher and King's collections that they used the latest bibliographical guides to determine which works should be collected. Ussher's annotation of the Bible of an early modern collector, the Frankfurt Mess Katalogs, along with King's careful selection of bibliographical aids such as Cardinal Robert Bellarmine's *De Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* (Cologne, 1617), Sisto da Siena's *Bibliotheca sancta* (Cologne, 1626), and Konrad Gesner's *Bibliotheca universalis* (Zurich, 1545), all listed in his catalogue of c.1686, tell their own story.<sup>70</sup>

The correspondence and surviving manuscripts of early modern scholars such as Ussher, Ware, Loftus, and King also demonstrate the importance of transcription. A letter of Robert Vaughan to Ussher, dated 1652, refers to the process of collation such transcriptions demanded: 'Moreover, about three years ago, I sent a copy of the Tract concerning the Saxon genealogies (extant, if I mistake not, in Gildas and Ninnius) unto you, to be corrected by your book; and Sir Simonds D'Ewes undertaking that charge for you, as Mr Dr. Ellis told me, returned me only this answer upon the back of my own papers.'<sup>71</sup> Ussher's decision to delegate the task to Simonds D'Ewes was not unusual nor was Vaughan's reliance on a transcription rather than the text.

This simple action highlights one of the chief methodologies of early modern collectors, the employment of that human version of a photocopier, the transcriber. From Ó Cléirigh's comments on the 'Book of Lecan Mic Firbisigh, which was procured for them after the transcription of the greater part [of the work]' it is clear that there were two aspects of collection policy concerning manuscripts: first, the collection of actual 'originals' and secondly, the transcription of manuscripts that one could not either afford to buy or access

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., xv and xvi.

<sup>70</sup> Ussher's 1608 library catalogue contained a section on bibliographical aids: TCD, 793, ff. 170r–186v. For King's c.1686 library see TCD, MS 1490.

<sup>71</sup> *U.W.*, xvi, 231.



directly.<sup>72</sup> It is abundantly obvious from various comments in contemporary correspondence that transcription was regarded as the principal method by which one might gain access to a text. Manuscripts in institutional libraries such as those at colleges in Oxford or Cambridge or the Royal libraries were less likely to be loaned to scholars (although some undoubtedly were). Hence we find scholars employing clerks to transcribe relevant passages from the many manuscript and printed texts necessary for their studies.

Inevitably, given the opportunity for human error, mistakes occurred. In Vaughan's letter of 1652 he mentions that he sent his tract for correction to Ussher since Sir Simonds D'Ewes disputed the reliability of his version.<sup>73</sup> Textual variations, then, were an occupational hazard of the early modern researcher but we would do well not to dismiss transcription too lightly, for its widespread use gives us a vital insight into collecting habits. Inherent in its development is necessity, the inability to access a particular text and hence the decision to use a simulacrum. Coupled with this is the likelihood that some owners might have been less willing to send precious texts abroad lest they might not be returned. Yet even bearing these caveats in mind surely the reliance on transcription tells us something about attitudes to texts as objects? Here we see collectors quite willing to use verifiable transcriptions of texts rather than the actual manuscripts or printed works. In other words, we are not seeing a glorification of the book as object, as a costly curiosity that must be purchased for its rarity, but rather the value of the text lies in its content.

This attitude to books and manuscripts is mirrored in attitudes to book-binding. The functionality of bookbinding during this period matches trends in England. David Pearson has pointed out that scholars in Oxford during the period 1550 to 1650 displayed very little interest in the binding of books and manuscripts.<sup>74</sup> Robert Cotton's instruction to the binder of MS Titus E. VII: 'Bind this book as strong as you can. . . . Let me have it on Thursday at the furdest' indicates that his chief concern was with the information contained within the object, the text, rather than the object itself.<sup>75</sup> This disregard for the aesthetic nature of the text as object is clearly evident among Cotton's Irish correspondents also.<sup>76</sup> So too is the relative lack of signatures on books. As Pearson has argued, the absence of ownership signatures during this period suggests that owners did not identify with their works in quite the

<sup>72</sup> *The Four Masters*, lxx.

<sup>73</sup> *U.W.*, xvi. 231–2.

<sup>74</sup> David Pearson, 'Scholars and Bibliophiles: Book Collectors in Oxford, 1550–1650', in Robin Myers and Michael Harris (eds.), *Antiquaries, Book Collectors and the Circles of Learning* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1996), 1–26.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>76</sup> Anthony Cains in his article 'The Long Room Survey of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Books of the First Collections', in Kinane and Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library Dublin*, 58, states that 'The most common type [of binding] we found is represented by the plain sheepskin binding by the Dublin printer John Franckton.'

same way as later seventeenth-century collectors did.<sup>77</sup> By the end of the seventeenth century in Ireland one finds an increased use of armorial bookplates, indicating a growing identification of the owner with the text, but during the first half of the seventeenth century the presence of signatures is by no means common.

While we are thinking of attitudes to collecting we must also be aware that formation of collections was not always a straightforward procedure indicating a succession of personal choices. One way of building a collection was to buy one ready-made. This was the approach taken by Michael Boyle, Archbishop of Armagh, who purchased the collection of Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury.<sup>78</sup> More commonly the development of institutional libraries was often subject to benefactions of libraries rather than guided purchase, thus limiting ability to direct the growth of collections. Although the library of Trinity College, Dublin, had been unusual in so far as it was initially enabled to purchase its collections because of a cash grant, its later development in the seventeenth century was very much subject to the benefactions of major libraries such as those of Ussher and, to a lesser extent, Alexander.

With benefactions came demands since the function of a benefaction in the donor's eyes was above all to commemorate the benefactor. The commemorative function of early modern libraries is abundantly apparent in the many stipulations governing the Alexander and Bath libraries that came to Trinity College, Dublin, in the early 1670s. Sir Jerome Alexander's will of 1670 bequeathed all his books and manuscripts covering the areas of law, arts, and science to Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>79</sup> It was clear, however, that Alexander was thinking more of his own immortality than benefiting the College for he was eager that his benefaction would not be subsumed into the greater collections of the College but rather would be housed separately in 'an addition to the said Colledge buildings next over against Chichester House; amongst which buildings soe to bee made, I doe order, devise and direct, that a particular Library shall bee built, wherein to place, sett and keepe the said Books and MSS herein aforesaid as well as those books which I have heretofore given and delivered unto the said Provost.'<sup>80</sup> The building was to 'bee called Alexander's Library and Lodgings'—the Lodgings to include accommodation for his Librarian who would faithfully produce a catalogue of his collection to ensure that no works would be sold off.<sup>81</sup> Indeed to

<sup>77</sup> Pearson, 'Book Collectors in Oxford', 13.

<sup>78</sup> TCD, MS 865.

<sup>79</sup> A partial copy of Alexander's will, concerning solely his bequest to TCD, may be found at TCD, MUN/LIB/10/17. A printed version of the complete will and a note on his life was published by Charles Rogers, 'Notes in the History of Sir Jerome Alexander', and J. P. Prendergast, 'Further Notes in the History of Sir Jerome Alexander', both in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, n.s. 2 (1873) 94–116 and 117–41.

<sup>80</sup> Rogers, 'Alexander', 99.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 99–100.

ensure that the collection remained intact Alexander demanded that his library was ‘onely to bee for the use of such as will study and peruse them’ and that no books were to be loaned lest they might not be returned.<sup>82</sup> His reasons for stipulating this demonstrate that he, at least, thought of his collection as comprising rarities: ‘the said Books &c being very many of them small and easily pocketed up and yet scarce, and rarely to be gotten for love or money.’<sup>83</sup> In fact, far from thinking about the wishes of the College, Alexander was distinctly suspicious of their intentions, and inserted safeguards into his will to ensure that they would abide by every letter of his bequest, even going so far as to call on the Archbishop of Armagh to check how his legacies were carried out ‘according to the true intent and meaninge of this my last Will & Testament and to cause to bee rectified & reformed what hee finds amiss therein or in any the same.’<sup>84</sup>

Whereas Alexander was deeply concerned to maintain the integrity of his own collection, Rachel, Countess of Bath and the wife of Ussher’s friend Henry Bourghier, was anxious to commemorate her husband (and indeed herself) by a slightly different method. Instead of donating an actual collection the Countess gave the College money to buy in works for the library. This gave the College the opportunity to guide the collection much more than they were able to with benefactions of books but it did not mean that Rachel Bourghier was in any way less interested in the commemorative function of the Bath library. Thomas Madden’s 1670 letter to Provost Seele demonstrates the active interest the Countess took in the development of the collection:

she hath been divers times in person to View the bookes contained in your Catalogue; out of which she hath cast all the (Quartos) resolving to send none but such as are in (Folio) and some of them she hath refus’d (with all Bishop Taylors Works and all other books in English, except Bishop Usher’s Annals) and Heylin’s Cosmography instead of which she hath chosen the Cytty’s of the World in 8 vol: a gaudy Book with whose beauty her Ladyship was soe well pleas’d, that she wish’d all the rest like them, and would have had them soe, but that she was made acquainted with your pleasure, in that particular however she would have *Antiquit Italiae* 2 vol and *Flandria Illustrata* in 2 vol: both with beguiled and bound aswell as may be of the rest of the books, which she hath chosen the Catalogue enclosed I will informe you of which; she desires a speedy answer.<sup>85</sup>

Madden might sniff at the Countess’ predilection for glossy folios over less substantial quartos (evidently she felt that others might judge books by their covers), but the Countess proved more than a match for him by reminding him that she was the benefactor. Indeed, she not only sought to direct the

<sup>82</sup> Rogers, ‘Alexander’, 100.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

<sup>85</sup> TCD, MUN/LIB/10/13r–v.

content of the collection but also insisted on each work being embellished with her coat of arms and an inscription specifically naming her as donor.<sup>86</sup> Like Alexander, she may well have insisted on their placement in a special collection. Certainly the description of the Bath library in John Dunton's 1698 visit to the College bears some similarities with what Alexander had envisaged: 'At the East end of this Library, on the right hand, is a chamber called "The Countess of Bath's Library", filled with many handsome Folios, and other Books, in Dutch binding, gilt, with the Earl's Arms impressed upon them; for he had been some time of this House.'<sup>87</sup> Admittedly by the time Dunton viewed it the Bath collection may have been augmented by additions of books of Jacobites that William III had declared should be seized and placed in the Trinity College library.<sup>88</sup>

Dunton's 1698 description of the library of Trinity College, Dublin, is an important one that reminds us that early modern libraries were not solely spaces that contained books:

we saw lying on a table the *Thigh-bone of a Giant*, or at least of some monstrous overgrown Man, for the Thigh-bone was as long as my Leg and Thigh; which is kept there as a convincing Demonstration of the *vast bigness* which some human Bodies have in former times arriv'd to. We were next shewed . . . the Skin of one *Ridley*, a *notorious Tory*, which had been long ago Executed.<sup>89</sup>

This gory curiosity would not have been out of place in libraries elsewhere in Europe and even the earliest inventory of the furniture of the TCD library refers to 'Three tables upon frames, and six wainscot formes, a table of benefactours, 12 great mapps besides many of the lesser, 4 Dutche tables, a sceliton with taffety hangings, a table with two globes'.<sup>90</sup>

If the early modern Irish library was a place of curiosities it was also an idea, a representation of identity. For some it was a polemical idea, an interpretation apparent, as we have seen, in Nicholas Bernard's dramatic account of events in Drogheda in 1641: 'It pleased God in answer to our prayers and fasting, wonderfully to deliver us and it out of their hands.'<sup>91</sup> Here the library is iconic, its fate mirroring the fate of its guardians, its survival pointing the way to salvation. Such an interpretation allowed Bernard to emphasize the providence of God on the one hand, and the barbarism of his opponents on the other, opponents who were willing to burn such a symbol of civilization.

His story reminds us of the fate of many seventeenth-century Irish libraries and points to the polemical use some might make not only of the

<sup>86</sup> See TCD, MUN/LIB/10/16 and MUN/LIB/10/15a.

<sup>87</sup> John Dunton, *The Dublin Scuffle*, ed. Andrew Carpenter (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 243.

<sup>88</sup> TCD, MS 2160a no. 23 is a price list of books that were apparently confiscated in 1690 and placed in the Bath library.

<sup>89</sup> Dunton, *Dublin Scuffle*, 242–3.

<sup>90</sup> J. P. Mahaffy (ed.), *The Particular Book of Trinity College Dublin* (London, 1904), 202.

<sup>91</sup> Bernard, *Siege*, 106.

contents but also of the idea of a library. However, Bernard's account is suggestive also for its inconsistencies. We are told that God preserved the library from 'their hands'. But whose hands? Bernard seems unsure. His 'Friar Walsh' was eager to put the library to the fire, but his later version makes a crucial distinction between 'the priests and friars' who 'talked much of the prize they should have of it' and the 'barbarous multitudes' who 'were so violent, that, as *Herod*, to have been the surer of the death of our Saviour, killed his own child, amongst those innocents at *Bethlehem*; so they burnt abundance of their own authors also, without distinction, where at first search they found but any of ours.'<sup>92</sup> Did the author decide to throw the blame on the 'barbarous multitudes' for the dramatic advantage of this interpretation, enhancing as it did the providential role of God, or did he recognize the cross-denominational interest in the preservation of libraries? Who can tell? Of one thing we can be sure: the 'prize' of a library in the period 1550 to 1700 lay not in its monetary value or any grandiose structure encompassing it, but rather in the content of the collections themselves.

<sup>92</sup> Bernard, *Siege*, 105.

# Libraries and Collectors, 1700–1800<sup>1</sup>

*Toby Barnard*

John Dunton, an entrepreneurial bookseller from London, boasted of the auctions that he organized in Dublin during the 1690s. He claimed to have imported into Ireland ‘a general collection of the most valuable pieces in Divinity, History, Philosophy, Law, Physick, Mathematicks, Horsemanship, Merchandize, Limning, Military Discipline, Heraldry, Musick, Fortification, Fireworks, Husbandry, Gardening, Romances, Novels, Poems, Plays, School-books and Bibles’. Dunton named some who had bought these works at his auctions. The list was headed by St George Ashe, a learned and well-travelled cleric, soon promoted from the provostship of Trinity College to the northern bishopric of Clogher (see Figure 4). Next came a pair of Church of Ireland clergymen, both of them also prominent schoolmasters. Another Dublin incumbent, Dr John Stearne, shortly to be advanced to the deanery of St Patrick’s and then in succession to the bishoprics of Dromore and Clogher, bought heavily. Five fellows of Trinity College were named; then, fourteen more Church of Ireland clergymen, mostly beneficed in or near Dublin. The buyers were not all clergy. Several members of Parliament as well as a miscellany of lawyers, a trio of printers, and a few landowners were thanked for their support.<sup>2</sup> Dunton’s sketch accurately reproduced the lineaments of the community of book collectors in Ireland. It can serve as a starting point for this account in which clergy of the established church were disproportionately numerous. They are followed by members of the learned professions, especially the law and medicine. Country gentlemen, although not absent and indeed apparently increasing in importance as book-buyers over the eighteenth century, tag along at the rear.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In writing this piece I owe much to those who have shared their knowledge of particular collections and sources with me: notably, Bernadette Cunningham, Raymond Gillespie, David Hayton, Rolf Loeber, Magda Stouthamer Loeber, Mark Purcell, William Roulston, and Julian Walton.

<sup>2</sup> *The Life and Errors of John Dunton*, 2 vols. (London, 1818), ii. 496, 516–25.

<sup>3</sup> R. C. Cole, ‘Private Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *The Library Quarterly*, 44 (1974), 231–47; Mary Pollard, *Dublin’s Trade in Books 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 214–16.



4. Portrait of St George Ashe by Hugh Howard. Ashe was successively Provost of Trinity College, Dublin (1692–5), Bishop of Cloyne (1695–7), Clogher (1697–1717), and Derry (1717–18). Clerics were prominent among the collectors of books in late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland. This association with learning, both as the owners and commentators on books and as authors, explains the convention of the episcopal portrait. Bishops frequently chose to be portrayed against a background of finely bound folios.

## The Practice of Collecting

Those preparing for the lettered professions usually bought their own copies of essential texts since there were few institutional libraries to which they could turn. The 'public' collections—conspicuously that of Trinity College, but also new foundations by bishops such as Narcissus Marsh and (later) Richard Robinson—deserve attention. Clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and servants of the state, once qualified, sometimes enlarged their holdings and a minority read and bought more widely. Casual comments in letters and the evidence of subscriptions show that this group, especially in the larger towns (most notably Dublin itself), constituted a prime market for ephemeral squibs, ballads, and satires, and also for solid histories, travelogues, philosophy, and theology. Books and pamphlets, in common with printed music, songs, and engravings, sustained and advanced sociability, conviviality, wit, and improvement, whether of self or the kingdom. The customers, essential to the more buoyant trade in print, were seldom obsessive bibliomanes. The last, hunters of the rare and owners of thousands rather than merely hundreds of volumes, were few. However, they too merit discussion.

Contemporaries and later analysts tended to comment on this last group: the passionate collectors. John Loveday, arriving in Dublin in 1732, described two public libraries there: at Trinity and at St Sepulchre's, near St Patrick's Cathedral, which would become better known by the name of its founder, Archbishop Narcissus Marsh. Loveday noted only one private library: that of Henry Ware. It was valued (improbably) at £3,000. Ware came of a line of passionate antiquarians, but (according to Loveday's informant) had not inherited the books of his ancestors and so had assembled his own.<sup>4</sup> A second visitor from England throws brighter light on the most celebrated collections in Ireland. Thomas Carte arrived in Dublin at almost the same moment as Loveday. Carte, nosing out materials for his life of the first Duke of Ormond, was put in touch with sympathetic owners and antiquaries. Manuscripts interested him more than printed books. Nevertheless, he sought scarce publications from the period. Some were owned by a senior fellow of Trinity College, Claudius Gilbert, a notable bibliophile. In time, Gilbert's library would be bequeathed to the college.<sup>5</sup> A second collection—that of Bishop John Stearne—was rich in both manuscripts and printings. Stearne was among those who had been praised as an enthusiastic book-buyer by Dunton

<sup>4</sup> T. Loveday to T. Hearne, 9 July 1732, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawlinson Letters, 15, f. 129; J. Loveday, *Diary of a Tour in 1732* (Edinburgh, 1890). For James Ware's collections: William O'Sullivan, 'A Finding List of Sir James Ware's Manuscripts', *PRIA*, 97C (1997), 2–99.

<sup>5</sup> F. McNamara to T. Carte, 1 Sep. 1732, 22 Dec. 1733; S. Lloyd to same, 6 Oct. 1732, Bodleian MS 103, ff. 537v, 542v–3, 545v–6. Gilbert's library is listed in TCD, MS 11.



almost forty years earlier. In the interim, Stearne had amassed a vast collection of manuscripts and printed works and he attended carefully to its disposition after his death, bequeathing the bulk of the manuscripts to Trinity College and the majority of the books to Marsh's Library.<sup>6</sup> He was happy enough to allow Carte access to the materials, mostly handwritten, in Dublin.<sup>7</sup>

Comparison of Stearne, his friend and fellow bishop, William King, or their mentor, Narcissus Marsh himself, avid in the quest for the esoteric, with the generality of clerical book-buyers reminds of the more modest ambitions and achievements of most. Before 1720, Simon Digby, as Bishop of Elphin, secluded himself at two residences in Connacht. His books—about 600 in all—were divided between these houses.<sup>8</sup> In the same province, Archbishop John Vesey, a venal Archbishop of Tuam, was dismayed to lose his library during the upheavals of the Jacobite war, but vowed to build a second.<sup>9</sup> Nathaniel Foy, removed from a Dublin parish to the bishopric of Waterford, worried when his books disappeared at sea.<sup>10</sup> Samuel Foley, Vesey's and Foy's contemporary, took his books from Dublin to County Down when he became a bishop. In 1695, after Foley's death, his library was returned to Dublin to be auctioned.<sup>11</sup> The catalogue enumerated nearly 1,700 items. A successor as Bishop of Down and Connor, Francis Hutchinson, gathered a collection that, numbering over 600, was also auctioned in Dublin. It may have been depleted before it was offered for sale in 1756, almost twenty years after he had died. At all events, the books fetched £73 11s. 02½d.<sup>12</sup>

Bishops usually had the money if not always the inclination to form their own libraries. The conscientious among them encouraged their subordinates to do likewise. Foy at Waterford in the 1690s sought guidance as to a small selection of works regarded as indispensable to any cleric.<sup>13</sup> Robert Howard,

<sup>6</sup> Will of Bp. J. Stearne, 7 March 1744[5], PRONI, DIO 4/9/5/1/1.

<sup>7</sup> A. Bury to R. Helsham, 26 Sep. [1732], Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 227, f. 24; T. C. Barnard, 'A Bishop and his Books: John Stearne', forthcoming; William O'Sullivan, 'John Madden's Manuscripts', in Vincent Kinane and Anne Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library, Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 104–19.

<sup>8</sup> Inventories of Bp. S. Digby's goods at Abbert and Lackan, c.4 July 1720, NLI, French of Monivea MSS, envelope 26.

<sup>9</sup> Abp. J. Vesey to Sir R. Southwell, 4 Sep. 1690, inserted into Gilbert Burnet, *History of his own time*, 4 vols. (London, 1809), iii. 88, in Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C. (I am grateful to Dr. Ian McBride for a copy of this letter).

<sup>10</sup> N. Foy to W. King, 26 March 1692, TCD, MSS 1995–2008/217.

<sup>11</sup> *A Catalogue of Books of the Right Reverend . . . Dr. Samuel Foley . . . The Books in the Catalogue will be Sold at his Lordship's Dwelling House in Bride Street, at a Peremptory Price for each Book . . .* (Dublin, 1695, ESTC R228123).

<sup>12</sup> *A Catalogue of the Books: being the Library of the Right Rev. Dr. Francis Hutchinson, late bishop of Down and Connor. To be sold by auction, by William Ross at Coffee-House of House of Lords* (Dublin, 1756), annotated copy in QUB, WP/66 Z 997/1; Gordon Wheeler, 'Bishop Francis Hutchinson: His Irish Publications and His Library', in John Gray and Wesley McCann (eds.), *An Uncommon Bookman: Essays in Memory of J. R. R. Adams* (Belfast: Linenhall Library, 1996), 140–55.

<sup>13</sup> N. Foy to W. King, 21 Jan. 1691[2], *ibid.*, TCD, MSS 1995–2008/204.

zealous as Bishop of Elphin during the 1730s, procured books to improve the calibre of his parochial clergy as well as for himself and his family. After Howard died in 1740, the volumes housed in his 'study' at Elphin, totalling more than 380, were bought by his successor, the younger Edward Synge. Bishop Synge, having almost certainly inherited and acquired many books of his own, may have intended the new purchase for the same local needs as had Howard.<sup>14</sup> Another solution to the problem of equipping penurious incumbents with instructive literature was to establish diocesan libraries. Haphazard in their distribution across the Irish provinces and in their contents, the collections did nevertheless improve the availability of reading matter within very restricted circles.<sup>15</sup>

Bishop Howard and Bishop Synge sprang from professional families in which books abounded. Synge's father, an archbishop of Tuam, was himself a prolific author. Yet, in the main, clerics who accumulated large libraries were not themselves deeply involved in authorship. Exceptions were Archbishop King, Foley, and then Hutchinson at Down and Connor, whose polemics and scholarly enquiries were buttressed by reference to a multiplicity of printed authorities. However, for the occasional topical sermon and for their regular preaching, the voluminous collections of the younger Synge, Howard, Digby, and even Stearne looked excessive. Those prelates who isolated themselves for lengthy spells in the countryside probably had no intellectual resource other than their own libraries. Even when in Dublin, it was unlikely that King, Synge, or Howard would immure themselves in Trinity or Marsh's. Yet the desire to have to hand ancient and modern authorities with which to prink their works did not explain satisfactorily the massive differences in scale of the collections. It was agreed how sparse were opportunities to buy desirable publications in early-eighteenth-century Ireland. Archbishop Marsh thought that Dublin specialists, who dealt chiefly in 'new trifles', should more properly be called 'sellers of pamphlets than book-sellers'.<sup>16</sup> Entrepreneurs like Dunton imported stock in the hope of satisfying Irish appetites. This resembled the trade in 'old master' paintings begun about the same time in Dublin. Fortunate bibliophiles travelled to Britain and beyond. Not only did they ship much back to Ireland, they established links with correspondents, agents, and specialists outside Ireland, who thereafter

<sup>14</sup> Inventory of Bp. R. Howard's books, 12 June 1740, NLI, PC 223 (6); receipt from Patience Howard to Bp. E. Synge, 20 Feb. 1740[1], *ibid.*, PC 225 (4); M. L. Legg (ed.), *The Synge Letters: Bishop Edward Synge to his Daughter, Alicia, Roscommon to Dublin, 1746–1752* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1996), p. xx.

<sup>15</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Cathedral Libraries before 1700', in Charles Benson and Siobhan Fitzpatrick (eds.), *That Woman—Studies in Irish Bibliography: A Festschrift for Mary 'Paul' Pollard* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2005), 175–92; Maura Tallon, *Church of Ireland Diocesan Libraries* (Dublin: SPCK, 1959); Julian Walton, 'The Library of Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford', *Decies*, 41 (1989), 15–19.

<sup>16</sup> Abp. N. Marsh to T. Smith, 17 Dec. 1698, 4 May 1700, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Smith MS 52, ff. 69, 75.

kept them informed and supplied. This option was open to a lucky handful. In 1693, James Bonnell, a pious and important bureaucrat in Dublin, wished urgently to put together the right books. He was unsure whether to employ an agent at auctions or trust a bookseller.<sup>17</sup> Customers had an almost instinctive suspicion that booksellers and publishers were about to gull them. Occasionally, the fear was justified. Also, it was not unknown for friends in the same calling to trick the unsuspecting when supplying them with books. Archbishop King was outraged when he detected Bishop Ashe in subsidizing his own purchases at King's expense.<sup>18</sup> In comparison with their contemporaries in England, most were inhibited by modest incomes. Collectors inevitably dwelt on disappointments, not their triumphs.

As demand grew, Irish booksellers became more adventurous in what they kept. The monotonous disparagement of their wares ignored unusual opportunities for dedicated collectors. From the 1690s, regular auctions re-circulated the contents of collections rich in English and continental printings.<sup>19</sup> The younger John Evelyn, residing in Dublin as a revenue commissioner, was pleased to find at auction books that he had long sought.<sup>20</sup> Incunabula and the classic editions of the Church Fathers and biblical glossators were snapped up by the greedy like King, Marsh, and Stearne; they ended up more chancily in the various diocesan libraries, which depended heavily on donations.<sup>21</sup> The tortuous lines of descent can seldom be traced in their entirety. Something of the genealogy of two works, which entered the library of St Finbarre's Cathedral, Cork, has been reconstructed.<sup>22</sup> The books, including the six volumes of Nicholas of Lyra's *Postillae perpetuae in Universam S. Scriptorum*, had been owned by Battle Abbey in England before it was dissolved at the Reformation.<sup>23</sup> Signatures and other marks of ownership occasionally hint at the routes that particular items had travelled. The library of the Coopers of Markree in County Sligo, dispersed in 1953, included a Grolier-bound copy of Procopius' *De Bello*

<sup>17</sup> List of S. Waring's books, PRONI, D 695/228; J. Bonnell to J. Strype, 22 Sep. 1692, Baumgartner MSS, Cambridge University Library, Add. MS 1/73.

<sup>18</sup> Bp. J. Stearne to Abp. W. King, 13 Dec. 1714, TCD, MSS 1995–2008/1555; Abp. W. King to Bp. J. Stearne, TCD, MS 2536, 137–8; same to A. Charlet, 20 Nov. 1714, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ballard MS 8, f. 29v.

<sup>19</sup> Máire Kennedy, 'Book Mad: The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin', *Dublin Historical Record*, 54 (2001), 48–71; eadem, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001), 191–219.

<sup>20</sup> J. Evelyn to J. Evelyn, senior, 10 July 1694, Evelyn letters, f. 668v, formerly at Christ Church, Oxford, now BL, Add. MS; list of books purchased in Ireland by J. Evelyn, 1696 and 1697, *ibid.*, box xi.

<sup>21</sup> N. J. D. White, *A Short Catalogue of English Books in Archbishop Marsh's Library Dublin, Printed before MDCXLI* (Oxford, 1905); N. J. D. White, *An Account of Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin* (Dublin, 1926).

<sup>22</sup> M. Connolly, 'Books Connected with Battle Abbey before the Dissolution: Some New Discoveries', *The Library*, 7th series, 1 (2000), 119–32.

<sup>23</sup> Nicholas of Lyra, *Postillae perpetuae in Universam S. Scriptorum* (Basle, 1498).

*Gottorum*.<sup>24</sup> In 1660, it had belonged to Edward Synge, briefly Bishop of Limerick; it was also said to have been a gift from Sir Richard Carney, the polymathic Ulster king of arms during the 1650s.<sup>25</sup> From the Synges it passed to the Coopers. (Edward Synge's heiress married Joshua Cooper, the owner of Markree, in 1758.) When it had first entered the Synges' possession and whether in England or Ireland are currently unknown.<sup>26</sup> The library at Markree offers further mysteries as to how unusual works arrived in Ireland. A fifteenth-century Flemish manuscript seems to have belonged to the Jesuits at Louvain in 1643. The religious houses at Louvain trained priests and monks for the Irish mission. This work may have been brought to Ireland during the troubled 1640s, while Counter-Reformation Catholicism was briefly ascendant, only to be snatched by victorious Protestants when the Catholic religious were harassed after 1649.<sup>27</sup> A third title in the Coopers' possession suggested more conventional acquisition. John Evelyn's *Kalendarium Hortense* of 1691 had been presented to St George Ashe by the author. Ashe travelled in England (and to Augsburg and Vienna), so may have encountered the famous virtuoso, Evelyn. Alternatively, Evelyn's son served for a time in Dublin and moved in the same circles as Ashe, who had returned as provost of Trinity to Ireland. The younger Evelyn was admitted to the revived Philosophical Society, which met in the college, and described the provost as 'polite, learned and ingenious'. Ashe, it was said, 'has all the books that come out worth reading'; some he lent to Evelyn. The son may have given his father's *Kalendarium* to Ashe. The latter was part of the same set of clever young graduates of Trinity as the elder Edward Synge, who perhaps bought the book after Ashe's death in 1718.<sup>28</sup>

## Motives for Collecting

Motives for collecting books ranged from the practical through fashion to addiction. Use at first outweighed ornament, especially when volumes were secluded in closets and studies, or hidden in cases and boxes. This changed as

<sup>24</sup> Procopius, *De Bello Gottorum* (Rome, 1506).

<sup>25</sup> For Kearney buying books see Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 229. On him in general see T. C. Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 248; 'The MacCarthy Mór', *Ulster's Office, 1559-1800* (Little Rock, 1996), 195-7, 198-9.

<sup>26</sup> Sale of books of Commander E. P. F. Cooper, Sotheby and Co., 14-16 Dec. 1953, lot 351.

<sup>27</sup> Sotheby and Co., sale, 7 Dec. 1953, lot 50.

<sup>28</sup> Sale of books of Commander E. P. F. Cooper, Sotheby and Co, 14-16 Dec. 1953, lot 42-51. On Ashe and the younger Evelyn: J. Evelyn to J. Evelyn, senior, 5 May 1694, Evelyn letters, f. 667v, formerly at Christ Church, Oxford, now in BL, Add. Ms; T. C. Barnard, 'Enforcing the Reformation', forthcoming; idem, *Making the Grand Figure* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004), 319, 323; K. T. Hoppen, *The Common Scientist in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of the Dublin Philosophical Society, 1683-1708* (London: Routledge, Kegan Paul, 1970), 36-7, 103, 166, 186-7.

books turned into decoration, and were displayed to visitors in glazed cupboards. In some instances it altered the look of books; it also added to the reasons to acquire them. Books started to be accommodated in spaces designated as libraries rather than being stored in intimate closets or modest presses. By the later 1730s, Thomas Rundle, an Englishman recently installed as Bishop of Derry, had a room in his grand Dublin residence called a library. It seems to have been used more for sociability than for study.<sup>29</sup>

If books came to be regarded as accessories in the lives of the polite and genteel, analyses of the books known to have been sold at public auction in eighteenth-century Ireland indicate more serious motives in their purchase. The majority of these collections belonged to members of the professions—the law, the church, and medicine—and those in the armed services and the government bureaucracy.<sup>30</sup> The impulse that had driven the collector to begin, and so accounted for the origin of the library, must be presumed to have been the need to prepare for a career. Neither in the law nor medicine was there an institution in Ireland to which novices could go to consult the essential texts. Even among the clergy, those who attended university—for intending ordinands of the Church of Ireland, predominantly Trinity College in Dublin; the Presbyterians from Ulster, usually the Scottish universities; Catholic priests, the colleges and seminaries on the European continent—had only limited access to the prescribed texts. In default, the serious equipped themselves with the essentials.<sup>31</sup> These clerics, once placed in their cures and often remote from the capital, had no real alternative to buying more books of their own. Drudging curates were disabled by penury from acquiring many; so too were the majority of Catholic priests.<sup>32</sup> For Church of Ireland incumbents, as diocesan libraries were slowly created and then, later in the century, when the enterprising opened circulating libraries and even provincial reading rooms, opportunities to dip into necessary and new publications were enlarged, but not greatly.

Members of professions other than the clergy had even fewer helps to print, and were thrown back on their own resources. In some cases, a minority, as

<sup>29</sup> T. C. Barnard, 'Learning, the Learned and Literacy in Ireland, 1650–1760', in T. C. Barnard, Dabhi Ó Cróinín, and Katharine Simms (eds.), *A Miracle of Learning: Studies in Irish Manuscripts and Learning. Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 207–32; T. C. Barnard, 'Libraries and Glazed Bookcases in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Additional Evidence', *18–19th Century Fiction Newsletter*, 13 (1999), [4–6].

<sup>30</sup> Cole, 'Private Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', 231–47; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 214–16.

<sup>31</sup> The commonplace book of James Stopford, c. 1711, later Bishop of Cloyne, reveals what a studious undergraduate acquired. TCD, MS 3754.

<sup>32</sup> W. Carrigan, 'Catholic Episcopal Wills', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 4 (1915), 68, 87, 89; Cole, 'Private Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', 234–6; Hugh Fenning, 'The Library of a Preacher of Drogheda: John Donnelly, O.P. (d. 1748)', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 18 and 19 (1977), 72–104; Pádraig Ó Suilleabháin, 'The Library of a Parish Priest of the Penal Days', *ibid.*, 6 and 7 (1963–4), 234–44.

among the clergy, developed a habit of buying more books than their work required. These acquisitions enlightened, entertained and—sometimes—impressed visitors. Books simultaneously offered subjects for polite and sociable discourse and an appropriate setting for such activities. Late in the 1730s, a traveller who stayed with John Stearne, the Bishop of Clogher, praised his host for keeping many of his volumes in cases and boxes in or near his own closet. This betokened modesty and a genuine interest in the contents of the books, and was contrasted with a use of books for show.<sup>33</sup> What Stearne had accumulated over fifty years far exceeded what he wanted for his own education. With only a couple of published tracts and verses to his credit, he had not yielded to pressures to write more expansively. Instead he had become, in the word of a fellow addict, a mere ‘bookworm’.<sup>34</sup> Print enabled him to stay abreast of the latest discoveries and speculations. Gregarious, he recognized that books could enliven an otherwise dull gathering. He also felt some responsibility to subordinates, the parochial clergy and parishioners, unable themselves to afford many publications. He was happy to share parts of his library with others, such as the inquisitive Carte. Stearne employed agents to chase the desirable in Britain and on the Continent. He exchanged news about, but also competed for, rarities with other passionate episcopal collectors. Indeed the bishops and higher clergy of the Church of Ireland, like their counterparts in the Catholic and dissenting confessions, constituted one of the most active and knowledgeable groups of book-collectors. Shared backgrounds at the university introduced them to treasures in its library, made them aware of gaps in its holdings, and allowed seniors to encourage them to begin their own libraries.

The varied thinking of bishops when they collected was sometimes revealed by their books’ subsequent fate. Some, such as Bishop Foley’s and Bishop Digby’s, were treated as property to be divided between their legatees. Unless specific bequests directed particular volumes to named beneficiaries, the collection was likely to be sold in its entirety, as happened with Foley’s and Hutchinson’s. Such sales assisted others, including laypeople, anxious quickly to create libraries for themselves. Hutchinson’s interests in witchcraft and Irish antiquities as well as in the more predictable theology were reflected in his books. The auction in 1756 allowed others with antiquarian interests—such as Mervyn Archdall—to buy. ‘Mr. Clements’, an office-holding Maecenas eager to make a splash in the Dublin pond, similarly stocked up with what the bishop had once possessed.<sup>35</sup> More matter-of-fact

<sup>33</sup> Autobiography of J. A. Oughton, National Army Museum, London, MS 8808-36-1, 42; J. Copping to Sir H. Sloane, 2 June 1738, BL, Sloane MS 4055, f. 338.

<sup>34</sup> Abp. W. King to Bp. J. Stearne, 27 Oct. 1720, TCD, MS 750/6, 146.

<sup>35</sup> *A Catalogue of the Books: Being the Library of the Right Rev. Dr. Francis Hutchinson*; Wheeler, ‘Bishop Francis Hutchinson: His Irish Publications and his Library’, 140–55.

were the instructions left by Henry Dalway, a gentleman from Ulster with a Dublin house. In 1699, Dalway decreed that all his law books, except duplicates, should pass to his son, another Henry. Two sons, Henry and Alexander, were to receive the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin volumes. His two daughters were bequeathed all the works in English, other than the legal treatises and a pair of Bibles (one kept in Dublin, the other in County Antrim).<sup>36</sup> In the next generation, the younger Henry Dalway ordered his library 'to be sold to best advantage'. He had lent some volumes to a nephew in Dublin, but they were included in the dispersal. He asked that the money from the sale pay for Communion cups for the dissenting congregation at Carrickfergus.<sup>37</sup>

These fates differed from the care of three obsessive bibliophiles for the future of their collections. Narcissus Marsh, while provost of Trinity, fostered scholarship, oriental, Irish, and patristic, and may well have introduced some of his young charges, such as Ashe and Stearne, to such delights. Marsh collected systematically. He saw both advanced scholarship and rudimentary print as weapons in the fight for Protestantism in Ireland. Indeed, the better to know and rout the enemy, Catholic classics and ephemera were also acquired. By the start of the eighteenth century he believed that the clergy and laity of the established Church of Ireland were hampered by the sparse supply of suitable books. Accordingly he dedicated himself to the foundation of a public library in Dublin (see Figure 5). The Archbishop did not simply transfer his own formidable collection to the new institution. Rather he identified what he wanted, and set out to acquire 'the fittest books to put into a library designed for divinity, civil and common law, medicine and anatomy, history, chronology, geography, mathematics'.<sup>38</sup> By 1712, Marsh—now near the end of his life—sought 'all the modern books he can in physick for his public library'.<sup>39</sup> He bought one ready-made library, that of Edward Stillingfleet, Bishop of Worcester from 1689 to 1699. A second collection, overwhelmingly of continental printings, came with the first library keeper, a Huguenot refugee, Elie Bouhéreau. Many of Marsh's own books were willed to the foundation, but his important manuscripts went elsewhere.<sup>40</sup>

Marsh's example, first as provost of the college, next as a conscientious archbishop in Dublin, and ultimately as public benefactor, impressed two younger clerics, both Dublin graduates and both destined for the episcopate. William King and John Stearne deliberately built up libraries comprehensive in their chosen spheres. They focused on theology and church history, but

<sup>36</sup> Will of H. Dalway, 6 Jan. 1698[9], PRONI, D 1618/8/5.

<sup>37</sup> Will of H. Dalway, 9 Dec. 1720, *ibid.*, D 1618/8/14.

<sup>38</sup> N. Marsh to T. Smith, 5 July 1704, Bodleian, Smith MS 52, xvii.

<sup>39</sup> P. Lloyd to H. Sloane, 28 Feb. 1711[12], BL, Sloane MS 4043, f. 29.

<sup>40</sup> Barnard, 'A Bishop and his Books', forthcoming; Muriel McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentlemen: A History of Marsh's Library*, 2nd edn. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003).



(a)



(b)

5. Two views of the interior of Marsh's Library, Dublin. The Library was built in 1701 by William Robinson to house the collection of books of Narcissus Marsh, Archbishop of Dublin. (a) Robinson's initial building, and (b) the extension added about 1710, with its cages for the protection of books while in use.



not exclusively. King, zealous in his defence of Protestant Ireland, protected his own rights as Bishop of Derry and Archbishop of Dublin from invasion, and the Church of Ireland, Irish House of Lords, and Privy Council from real and imagined enemies. Books and documents, sometimes originals but also copies, assisted these causes. Far-reaching as were his campaigns, they do not adequately explain the scale of King's purchases. His library, numbering approximately 7,000 works, was to be a resource, but how many were admitted to it during his own life is unclear. Moreover, how best it was to be used after his death (in 1729) was also uncertain. By then Dublin had Marsh's benefaction, as well as the College library. King's mind reverted to his main cure outside Dublin, namely the see of Derry, where the lack of books was acute and the threat from Protestant dissenters urgent. In the past, he had secured part of the library of a predecessor at Derry, Hopkins, for the diocese. In the event, much of King's library was acquired by his junior, Theophilus Bolton, Archbishop of Cashel. And so it was to the diocesan library in County Tipperary that it went.<sup>41</sup>

A reverse process awaited the library of King's junior and friend, Stearne. By the 1730s, the ageing Stearne, having frequented Dublin, had effectively retired to Clogher. His collection, like King's and Marsh's, consisted of manuscripts as well as books. Stearne snapped up materials of historical and topical interest more voraciously than either Marsh or King. He amassed much relating to the seventeenth-century upheavals through which Stearne's forebears in Ireland had lived. Antiquarianism alone did not guide this policy. Alert to the local dangers to Protestants in Ireland, Stearne wished to keep in remembrance what they had suffered, particularly in the 1640s. Notable in his collection were originals and contemporary copies of the depositions that detailed Protestant losses in the uprising of 1641. Stearne thought that Trinity College was the appropriate repository for these documents. Both he and his father had been associated with the institution, which, with its splendid and recently completed new library, might be regarded as the physical and ideological embodiment of Protestant Ireland. Accordingly, at the centenary of the 1641 rebellion, Stearne's collections relating to the uprising came to the college.<sup>42</sup>

Bishop Stearne, like Archbishop Marsh before him, differentiated between distinct components in his library. Stearne sent the manuscripts to

<sup>41</sup> *Catalogue of the Cashel Diocesan Library* (Boston, 1973); R. S. Matteson, 'Archbishop William King and the Conception of his Library', *The Library*, 6th series, 13 (1991), 238–53; R. S. Matteson, *A Large Private Park: The Collection of Archbishop William King, 1650–1729*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: LP Publications, 2003).

<sup>42</sup> J. Stearne to H. Dodwell, 13 Sep. 1709, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. Lett. C. 23, f. 82; Aidan Clarke, 'The 1641 Depositions', in Peter Fox (ed.), *Treasures of the Library, Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin: Trinity College, 1986), 112; William O'Sullivan, 'The Eighteenth-Century Rebindings of the Manuscripts', *Long Room*, 1 (1970), 21, 28; idem, 'John Madden's Manuscripts', 107–10.

Trinity; his books were destined for Marsh's own public library in Dublin. This was a posthumous tribute. It suggested that Stearne believed that the books would be more useful and more used in the capital than as an endowment for remote Clogher. He did not entirely ignore the wants of his diocese: he inaugurated the construction of a modern cathedral. So far as his books were concerned, Stearne ordered that nothing should be given to Marsh's that was already on its shelves. Duplicates were to be sold and the proceeds distributed among the curates of the Clogher diocese. In the event, his executors could not be bothered with this chore. Instead they parcelled up the residue, numbered each parcel, and had the curate draw lots for them. Stearne's original division between print and script was not in practice as neat as has been suggested. A total of 382 volumes of bound pamphlets were sent to Trinity in 1740. Amounting to over 4,300 separate items, they consisted largely of tracts occasioned by the civil wars of the 1640s and the crises of 1678 to 1681 and 1685 to 1691.<sup>43</sup> As such they might be regarded as complementing the depositions. Contrary to Stearne's intentions, the volumes contained much that was not in the catalogue of Marsh's. It was impracticable to break up bound volumes and redistribute items between the two established libraries. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which Stearne had conceived of the university as the more fitting custodian of this controversial material. Ironically, after his death, what was placed in the new diocesan library for the starveling incumbents of Clogher included many seventeenth-century pamphlets of the type hoarded by Stearne.<sup>44</sup>

## Non-clerical Collectors

So far this account has concentrated on those with a continuing professional need of books. Some intending for public life were also exhorted to prepare themselves with a regime of reading. In 1767, William Fitzgerald, Marquess of Kildare, and eventually second Duke of Leinster, was lectured on what to read. It was conceded that he had been educated in a literary way and through grand tourism in continental Europe. However, having been elected to Parliament for the city of Dublin, the young aristocrat was now urged to study civil and other laws. To this end he should work through Justinian and Cicero and modern authorities like Grotius, Pufendorf, Burlamachi, Sanderson, and Montesquieu. At the same time, Kildare was instructed to

<sup>43</sup> List of J. Stearne's pamphlets in TCD, MS 2932.

<sup>44</sup> This portion of the Clogher Diocesan Library is now in the John Rylands Library, Manchester. For the whole collection: *The Clogher Diocesan Library Including the Moffett Library* (Monaghan, 1916); Tallon, *Church of Ireland Diocesan Libraries*, 9–10.

read treatises on feudal tenures, trade, and commerce. Then, related to his developing career in Parliament, he should inform himself about the law of Parliament and the masters of oratory, Cicero and Quintilian.<sup>45</sup> Kildare inherited one of the largest landed fortunes in mid-eighteenth-century Ireland, and with it a mansion with a well-established library. So finding the recommended volumes would have posed few problems. Even so, his literary and historical interests were tepid alongside the zeal of his contemporary, the first Earl of Charlemont, in assembling a library suitable to a public man.<sup>46</sup>

Less affluent members of the Irish parliament encountered greater difficulties and seem usually to have had access to fewer books than were proposed for Kildare. Three from the time of George II suggest the modesty of libraries of the parliamentary gentry (see Figure 6). Cornelius O'Callaghan, a lawyer who had converted from Catholicism, sat briefly as member for Fethard. Work explained seven folio and twenty-five octavo treatises on the law. Many were severely practical, relating to the minutiae of conveyancing and relations between landlord and tenant. O'Callaghan, in common with so many in his profession, possessed books—eighty further titles—which catered to diverse interests. Bibles, prayer book, printed sermons, apologetic, and exegesis mingled with classical and modern history. As well as accounts of recent events in Britain (including Clarendon's *History* and a *Life* of Oliver Cromwell) and in Europe, he had several about Ireland: Molyneux; Keating; Ware; McCartin. Amusement elbowed improvement. He owned eight volumes of *The Spectator*, Pope's Poems, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Robinson Crusoe*.<sup>47</sup> The picture projected by Callaghan's volumes is varied but hardly contradicted by those left by another former MP, Jeffrey Paul. Neither he nor O'Callaghan had collections that rivalled in size those of clerical and professional contemporaries. Paul, with Nonconformist antecedents rather than O'Callaghan's Catholic past, owned devotional works that breathed an ethos grave, even severe. In all, 188 titles were detailed. Although he shared O'Callaghan's liking for history, it hardly embraced Ireland, at least on the evidence of his library list.<sup>48</sup> A third member of the Dublin parliament at this time, Henry Maxwell, assembled a substantial library. Maxwell, a privy

<sup>45</sup> *Advice to a Newly Elected Member of Parliament, Inscribed to the Right Honble. William Fitzgerald, Commonly Called Marquess of Kildare* (Dublin, [1767], ESTC T96235), 4–7; E. FitzGerald (ed.), *Lord Kildare's Grand Tour, 1766–1769* (Cork, 2000); E. M. Johnston-Liik, *The History of the Irish Parliament*, 6 vols. (Belfast, 2002), iv, 159–62; Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 51–2, 207.

<sup>46</sup> *Catalogue of the Important, Extensive and Valuable Library of a Deceased Nobleman*, in RIA, MS 12 R 8.

<sup>47</sup> Inventory of C. O'Callaghan, Dec. 1737, Tipperary South Riding Museum, Clonmel, Acc. 1985/65; Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, v, 377–8.

<sup>48</sup> NLI, MS 13,991, openings 3, 15, 19, 21; T. C. Barnard, 'The Languages of Politeness and Sociability in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in D. G. Boyce, R. Eccleshall, and V. Geoghegan (eds.), *Political Discourse in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 199–200; Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, vi, 32.



6. Engraved bookplate of Dominic Trant of Dingle, Esq., c.1780. This design was popular in Ireland. More than forty-five examples are known. Among those who used it were Archbishop Troy of Dublin, his Dominican colleague, O'Finan, and two Church of Ireland clergymen, the Revd George Sealy and the Revd John Cliffe. It was also adopted by another family from County Kerry—the Orpens. The owner of this plate was probably the father of the Dominic Trant who briefly sat as member of Parliament for St Canice between 1781 and 1783. E. M. Johnson-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, 6 vols. (Belfast, 2002), vi. 433–4; B. N. Lee, *Bookpile Bookplates* (1993); E. A. Martin, *A Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors* (Dublin, 2003), 104–6.

councillor, concerned himself in multifarious public projects, particularly in Ulster where his estates lay. Maxwell's books, auctioned in Dublin early in 1734, fetched £58. This total suggested a collection of between 400 and 500 volumes. Because of worries that the books would not make high prices, a friend of the executors promised to bid at the auction, 'only as a setter to raise the price'.<sup>49</sup>

Those whose livelihoods rested on and constantly required print scorned the landed, even the squires in Parliament, for their lack of interest in books. Some support for the dismissive attitude of the bookish and cultivated, such as Jonathan Swift, comes from the statistics of those whose libraries were sold at auction and merited a printed catalogue, a copy of which has survived. The apparent under-representation of the gentry as owners of books might be

<sup>49</sup> E. Brice, executor's accounts, PRONI, D 1556/16/7/13; R. Maxwell to R. Maxwell, 2 June 1735, *ibid.* D 4718/L1; Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, v. 222–3.

explained charitably by the greater likelihood that their collections would remain in their mansions, pass to heirs, be supplemented modestly, and not be dispersed by public sale. Clerics, in particular those who amassed many books, were frequently celibate, making it more probable that they would direct their collections to be sold in aid of a good cause after their demise. By the end of the eighteenth century, gentlemen formed a larger proportion of the owners whose libraries merited sale by auction. Negative factors, the disturbed state of the kingdom and the inclination of more to uproot themselves from it, could explain the rising proportion. Also, the designation 'gentleman' hid a multiplicity of types, notably the urban gentry composed of the leaders of the professions and bureaucracy. Then, too, the proliferation of titles and genres, perhaps most spectacularly the novel, may have induced more squires (or more accurately their wives and daughters) to indulge in books. Despite these trends, Martha McTier complained from Belfast in 1784 of the vapid society to which she was often condemned. A month could be spent 'in what was called the best company, without hearing a book named, an opinion stated, or a sentiment introduced which could give rise to a conversation interesting to anyone above a chambermaid'.<sup>50</sup>

Characteristic of the apparently haphazard buying of print by members of the squirearchy is a bill from the 1750s. A Dublin bookseller, Cornelius Wynne, supplied the youthful William Townley Balfour, inheritor of valuable property in Counties Fermanagh and Louth. Balfour, after schooling at the Revd. Arthur Conolly's prestigious establishment at Finglas, finished his education abroad, probably in Switzerland. Seriousness was indicated by his purchase of the third and fourth volumes of Hume's *History of England*, and an eight-part publication, the 'circle of sciences', although the latter was designed by John Newbery for novices.<sup>51</sup> More for diversion may have been a set of Madame de Maintenon's *Memoirs*, popular in Ireland.<sup>52</sup> Also, Balfour bought an eight-volume edition of Shakespeare. Apparently frivolous were Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* and six volumes of 'select novels'.<sup>53</sup> Finally, Balfour invested in an expensive (£1 12s 6d) copy of Philip Miller's *Gardener's Dictionary*. This work, with obvious practical applications, frequently turned up on bookshelves in Ireland (as in England).<sup>54</sup> Balfour through his books persisted in some of the serious studies, for example of

<sup>50</sup> Jean Agnew (ed.), *The Drennan-McTier Letters. 1. 1776–1793* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1998), 179.

<sup>51</sup> The third edition of this improving series, *The Circle of Sciences*, was published in Dublin in 1752.

<sup>52</sup> Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 189.

<sup>53</sup> *The Female Quixote* had both Dublin and London editions in 1752.

<sup>54</sup> Bill of C. Wynne, Nov. 1757 to Nov. 1759, NLI, MS 10276/9; J. Dobbin to Sir W. Fownes, 12 July 1735, 30 Aug. 1735, 18 Sep. 1735, NLI, MS 8802/4; account for 1735, *ibid.*, MS 8801/1; H. Brownrigg to same, 1 Jan. 1736, n.s., *ibid.*, MS 8802/4; R. Edgeworth account book, s.d. 31 Dec. 1733, 9 Feb. 1733[4], NLI, MS 1510, 90, 94; Legg (ed.), *The Synge Letters*, 206; Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 98.

history, to which he had been introduced at school and in the academy. Cerebration mingled with the quest for pleasure and for practical knowledge through which he, his inheritance, his tenants, and ultimately the kingdom could be improved.<sup>55</sup>

Although country houses like Balfour's Townley Hall succumbed to a fashion for reading matter, the demand was probably stronger in the town. At Finnebrogue in County Down, much of the collection had been dispersed after the death of its owner, Henry Maxwell, in 1730. In deciding what to sell, the books kept in Dublin may have been distinguished from those at the family seat. Not everything owned by Maxwell went.<sup>56</sup> As Finnebrogue was restocked by later generations, an impression of serendipity is inescapable. Changing tastes, the invention and popularity of certain genres (notably novels), and the accidents of inheritance left distinct deposits. Losses confuse any clear picture. By the twentieth century, titles bought by the Maxwells in the eighteenth century had been supplemented and outnumbered by the arrival in County Down of the Percevals' books. The latter family, with branches in Counties Sligo and Waterford, had long been active users of print. Dean William Perceval, a quondam tutor at Christ Church in Oxford, belonged to the band of Church of Ireland dignitaries who had collected enthusiastically and competitively in the era of Marsh, King, and Stearne.<sup>57</sup> Later, in the 1730s, he had joined in the gatherings of the nascent Dublin Society, which itself sponsored useful publications. One of the dean's sons followed him into the church, and was in turn busy in the Dublin Society and the Physico-Historical Society; another, training for the law, also had a professional need for books. Eventually, marriage brought a remnant of the Percevals' library to County Down, but how much had been sold, borrowed, lost, or pilfered over the years is currently impossible to ascertain. Nevertheless, the residue suggests cerebral and practical as well as purely recreational uses of print.<sup>58</sup>

Similar chances have determined what now is to be found in the library of another northern house, Springhill, in County Londonderry.<sup>59</sup> The book-buying by the Conynghams, the owners of Springhill, sometimes reflects

<sup>55</sup> For the Balfours' circumstances: T. Barnard, *A New Anatomy of Ireland: The Irish Protestants, 1649–1770* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), 61.

<sup>56</sup> Volumes with his signature that were retained include an edition of Plutarch's *Lives*, issued in London in 1727, and acquired by Maxwell the year before he died. He seems to have interested himself in Locke and Newton at this time, as well as having more general publications like *The Tatler*.

<sup>57</sup> Abp. W. Palliser to H. Dodwell, 19 Oct. 1697, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. Lett. C. 29, f. 29; same to W. Perceval, 8 Feb. 1700[1], PRONI, D 906/58; W. Perceval to H. Dodwell, 10 July 1703, Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. Lett. C. 29, f. 64.

<sup>58</sup> I am very grateful to G. Perceval-Maxwell for his notes on the surviving collection, now in England, and to Rolf Loeber for directing me to them.

<sup>59</sup> M. Lennox-Conyngham, *An Old Ulster House and the People who Lived in it* (Dundalk: Tempest Press, 1946).

their original Presbyterian sympathies and frequent forays to learn, earn, and fight in Britain and continental Europe. Soldiering—perhaps surprisingly—afforded long periods of leisure, and sometimes solitude, which reading could fill. One volume now at Springhill found its way there—although not before the 1830s—from the ‘Military Library, Londonderry’.<sup>60</sup> Before that, William Conyngham, who fought in the Seven Years’ War, bought manuals helpful to his military career. As well as popular tracts in English, such as Humphrey Bland’s *A Treatise of Military Discipline* (also bought by a Maxwell soldiering at the same time),<sup>61</sup> he brought home *L’Art de la Guerre*, published in Paris in 1740, and may have acquired Maurice de Saxe’s *Les Reveries Memorials sur l’Art de la Guerre* from Thomas Staples.<sup>62</sup> Guides to the care of horses also appear. Differing requirements of family members were reflected in a 1651 edition of Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, which George Conyngham had bought in 1733/4 from Samuel Fuller, whose Dublin establishment specialized in scholastic texts.<sup>63</sup> Again, as at Finnebrogue, the quirks of descent brought books from other houses to Springhill. One group had previously been owned by the Earl and Countess of Blesington. The Countess’s purchases included eight volumes of *The Spectator*, novels, foreign literature, and programmes for oratorios performed in Dublin during the 1740s. The appeal of fashionable charity to prosperous women is confirmed by Lady Blesington’s original ownership of a volume of sermons preached on behalf of the Incorporated Society, to which her husband subscribed. Reflective perhaps of the Blesingtons’ grandeur rather than of the more modest circumstances of the Conynghams were the first three folios of *Vitruvius Britannicus*.<sup>64</sup> However, interest in architecture, first with engravings of ancient and modern edifices, but then with practical guides to correct building, was spreading and affected the contents of Irish bookshelves.<sup>65</sup> It connected with the proliferation of other texts that expounded both the theory and practice of agricultural, technological, and ethical improvement.

In a few houses of the important, books mutated from being elements in the display of the grand figure to being read enthusiastically.<sup>66</sup> Bibliophiles, or at least collectors whose assemblages at their dispersal were deemed worthy of separate catalogues, were found more frequently among the professionals, especially in Dublin. This suggests something about the ways in which books,

<sup>60</sup> M. Purcell, ‘Springhill’, unpublished National Trust library collection-level survey, 11. Cf. Barnard, *A New Anatomy of Ireland*, 190–3, 198.

<sup>61</sup> Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline* (London, 1740).

<sup>62</sup> Maurice de Saxe, *Les Reveries Memorials sur l’Art de la Guerre* (Mannheim, 1747).

<sup>63</sup> Mary Pollard, *Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000), 230–1.

<sup>64</sup> *Vitruvius Britannicus* (London, 1715–1725).

<sup>65</sup> Christine Casey, ‘Architectural Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 3 (1988), 105–13.

<sup>66</sup> Barnard, ‘Learning, the Learned and Literacy in Ireland’, 207–32.

and talk about them, fitted into urbane and urban society. Glimpses into the circles in which Jonathan Swift, William King, Richard Edgeworth, John Putland, Martha McTier, and William Drennan orbited show how print stimulated talk and how talk could be transmuted into print. Drennan light-heartedly bemoaned the fact that the dullness of Newry would oblige him to study 'some of the scarcer and more valuable medical books'. However, his reading, far from being restricted to his professional interests, ranged widely, and formed a strong ingredient in his correspondence.<sup>67</sup>

Drennan's zest for books was shared by others in the medical—and other—professions. Doctors and lawyers were well-represented among the owners of collections sold at public auction.<sup>68</sup> The exigencies of training and the absence of libraries to which they might repair forced the keen to buy their own. In time, albeit with a minority, modest collections expanded. About 1690, one Dublin lawyer owned fifty-nine law books.<sup>69</sup> Another, the convert from County Galway, Patrick French, made his own collection, which included a commonplace book into which he entered precedents and cases. In time, his son, Robert French, also qualified for the bar: by the 1740s his purchases of books in Dublin were eclectic.<sup>70</sup> Typical of the lawyers whose interests were not confined to the crabbed study of the law were John Huson and Philip Ridgate. The library of Huson, a barrister, was auctioned at the Parliament House in Dublin in 1737. Alongside the legal digests were histories, including those of Irish interest such as *Pacata Hiberniae*, Ware's *History and Antiquities of Ireland* in the 1705 edition, an account of the Elizabethan lord deputy Perrot, Molyneux's *Case*, and the histories of the 1640s by Temple and Borlase. Huson had also owned the third edition of the *Life and Actions of Oliver Cromwell*. More specialized interests were hinted at by five pamphlets on the controversy over the standing army and another seven Quaker tracts. A taste for foreign travel, whether vicarious or not, was shown in an illustrated book of Roman temples and palaces. Another recreation common among those of Huson's status was catered to in Bradley's *Gardening* in the sixth edition of 1731. Finally, it is worth noting the presence of Toland's *Nazaraenus*. Lawyers were accused of anti-clericalism and enmity towards orthodox religion: passions that Toland fanned.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Agnew (ed.), *The Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1, 1776–1793, xxxvi–1, 158.

<sup>68</sup> Cole, 'Private Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', 231–47; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 214–16.

<sup>69</sup> Notes by Ebenezer Wright, c. 1690. Acton MSS, NLI, microfilm p. 4529; Edward Keane, P. B. Phair, and T. U. Sadleir (eds.), *King's Inns Admission Papers, 1607–1867* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1982), 521.

<sup>70</sup> Case book of P. French, NLI, MS 4917; account books of R. French, *ibid.*, MSS 4918–19; T. C. Barnard, 'The Worlds of a Galway Squire: Robert French of Monivea, 1716–1779', in Gerard Moran and Raymond Gillespie (eds.), *Galway: History and Society* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1996), 271–96.

<sup>71</sup> *A Choice Collection of Books, the Library of John Huson, Esq; Counsellor at Law, Deceased* (Dublin, 1737, ESTCT7710); Keane, Phair, and Sadleir (eds.), *King's Inns Admission Papers*, 240.



Dr Philip Ridgate concentrated on a different branch of the law, and presided as vicar-general over at least one bishop's court. As the son of a barrister, he may have inherited some legal commentaries.<sup>72</sup> Like Huson, he acquired many key works on Irish history of the past two centuries. He, too, had *Pacata Hiberniae*, Temple, Borlase, and Ware. In addition, he bought two recent editions—of the letters of the first Earl of Strafford and of the first Earl of Orrery.<sup>73</sup> Alternative perspectives on the past were offered by O'Flaherty's *Ogygia* (1685), Keating's *History* (1723), and Peter Walsh's *History and Vindication of the Irish Remonstrance*, published in 1674. Ridgate possessed several works intended to polish the gentry and aspirant gentlemen. Most blatant in that regard was *The Young Gentleman Instructed* of 1736. There were also copies of *The Gentleman's Magazine* and the *London Magazine*. These acquisitions may connect with another post—as a herald—that he held: Athlone Pursuivant.<sup>74</sup> Ridgate shared Huson's interest in gardening, having a copy of Evelyn's *Gardener's Almanac*. The growing enthusiasm for novels was revealed in a five-volume set of Richardson's *Pamela*. Architecture also featured. The three-volume conspectus of recent classical buildings in Britain, *Vitruvius Britannicus*, was present, together with unspecified maps, prints, tracts on fortification, and Rossi's guide, *Roma Antica*.<sup>75</sup>

Would-be barristers, required to study in London, were exposed to a richer choice of print, some of which they carried back to Ireland. Attorneys, a lower branch of the legal fraternity, prepared for their trade by apprenticeship. Some observers sneered at the poor education of 'hackney' attorneys, and despised their lack of learning. Nevertheless, Dunton remembered attorneys gratefully as customers at his Dublin sales. Attorneys were also well-represented among subscribers for local publications, such as Lawrence Whyte's poems in 1740.<sup>76</sup> Trainee doctors and surgeons were obliged to travel further for their education. Some selected Scotland, others London. The ambitious and affluent preferred continental Europe. Again, these fortunates sampled a tempting selection of books. Returning to Ireland, some at least were addicted and acquisitive. In the Ulster of the 1690s, Vincent Ferguson, a Presbyterian doctor, congratulated himself on procuring 'a small library, well picked', containing 'the marrow of all ancient and modern authors'.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Case papers, J. Williams v F. Williams, 30 Aug. 1744, NLI, PC 438.

<sup>73</sup> William Knowler (ed.), *The Earl of Strafforde's Letters and Dispatches*, 2 vols. (London, 1739, ESTC T110679); *A Collection of the State Letters of the Right Honourable Roger Boyle* (London, 1742, ESTC N149784).

<sup>74</sup> 'MacCarthy Mór', *Ulster's Office*, 205.

<sup>75</sup> *A Catalogue of Books, Being the Library of the late Philip Ridgate, esq., LL.D.* ([Dublin], 1746).

<sup>76</sup> Barnard, *New Anatomy of Ireland*, 122–8; idem, 'The Gentrification of Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 12 (1997), 137–55; *Life and errors of John Dunton*, ii, 521; Lawrence Whyte, *Poems on Various Subjects, Serious and Diverting* (Dublin, 1740, ESTC T169301), pp. xi–xix.

<sup>77</sup> V. Ferguson to H. Sloane, 14 July 1691, 4 Feb. 1697[8], BL, Sloane MSS 4036, f. 106; 4037, f. 25.

Ralph Howard and Thomas Kingsbury, prominent practitioners in Dublin, had sizeable libraries. Each had to be sold to pay pressing expenses. Cultivated physicians like Sir Thomas Molyneux and Edward Barry ornamented polite societies keen on literary gossip and serious reflection stimulated by books. This bookishness among medical men led one, Edward Worth, in his generation the foremost physician of Dublin, to bequeath his volumes as a collection to Dr Steevens' new hospital. Worth's library reveals the distinctive opportunities, if not concerns, of the medical bibliophile. Among Irish collections whose contents can be analysed with reasonable confidence, Worth's was unusual in the large proportion of continentally printed works.<sup>78</sup> Earlier, another with a medical doctorate, Jeremy Hall, had owned books produced in Catholic Europe. In contrast to Worth, Hall willed these trophies of the grand tour to the ignorant aristocrats for whom he had acted as bear-leader and to his alma mater, Dublin University. Sir Patrick Dun, a leading Dublin doctor in Queen Anne's reign and a regular at the gatherings of the book-loving Archbishop King and John Stearne, left his books to the College of Physicians. At a lower altitude, the effects of an apothecary in Cork who died in 1760 showed dependence on and interest in the printed word.<sup>79</sup>

## The Edgeworths: A Case Study

Because institutional collections were so few, it has been suggested, individuals had to form their own. For the same reason, it was difficult to decide a permanent destination for treasured volumes. At the start of the eighteenth century, other than the library of Trinity College, only a scattering of puny diocesan libraries offered safe shelves. The university collection, adopted by the Irish parliament as the symbol of 'revolution principles' and the Protestant interest, was spectacularly re-housed after 1717.<sup>80</sup> Books came in more slowly. However, devout sons of the establishment, such as Gilbert, Stearne, and Archbishop Palliser of Cashel did add to the stocks. Other notable additions, the collections of Fagel and Quin, rich in non-English works, arrived just as the nineteenth century dawned.<sup>81</sup> Newer 'public'

<sup>78</sup> 'Bibliotheca Worthiana', TCD, MS 12; Barnard, *New Anatomy of Ireland*, 130, 137; Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 63, 105, 148; Muriel McCarthy, 'An Eighteenth-Century Bibliophile', *Irish Arts Review*, 3/4 (1986), 29–33.

<sup>79</sup> Inventory of J. Bentley, 1760, TCD, MS 2015/383; Barnard, *New Anatomy of Ireland*, 138, 140.

<sup>80</sup> E. P. McParland, *Public Architecture in Ireland, 1680–1760* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), 143–58.

<sup>81</sup> L. Brummel, 'The Fagel Library in TCD', in L. Brummel, *Miscellanea Libraria* (The Hague, 1957); Vincent Kinane, 'The Fagel Collection', in Fox (ed.), *Treasures of the Library of Trinity College Dublin*, 158–69; Veronica Morrow, 'Bibliotheca Quiniana', *ibid.*, 184–96; Jean-Paul Pittion, 'The Fagel Collection', *Hermathena*, 121 (1976), 108–16.

collections owed their origins to the clergy of the established Church of Ireland and their perception of serious gaps in provision waiting to be filled. Some founders of libraries, as with Marsh, bought purposively to ensure that appropriate titles were available. Other foundations were at the mercy of the discards of the well-meaning. Who, other than the clergy, was able to consult the volumes had yet to be decided. At Trinity, those other than the Fellows were admitted to the library on swearing an oath, 'which makes the library useful to all sorts of people'. At Marsh's, admission appears to have been more permissive, but whether women were allowed in, let alone those who did not conform to notions of gentlemen and graduates, cannot be shown.<sup>82</sup> The only solid evidence about readers in a 'public' library relates to that of Archbishop Robinson at Armagh. When, eventually, it opened in 1796, gentlewomen as well as gentlemen used it. Apart from the insistence that readers deport themselves and dress properly, borrowing of books was permitted only after a hefty deposit had been left. These rules made the library a preserve of the well-heeled.<sup>83</sup>

The number of collections made by the benevolent or the commercially minded increased modestly during the eighteenth century. In the main these 'public' facilities supplemented rather than replaced what individuals collected. The Edgeworths in County Longford can stand for those families in which books bulked large and permeated their culture. Richard Edgeworth was training for the bar in the 1720s. He bought books accordingly. As he was studying in London, like other intending Irish lawyers, dangerous and extravagant tastes might be picked up; so were books. Edgeworth, returned to Ireland, soon inherited a midlands estate, and abandoned the courts. From the 1730s until 1770 he divided his time between the Irish midlands, Dublin, and England. He bought history, theology, sermons, and manuals that might improve the productivity and profitability of his inheritance. During the 1720s, he subscribed to projected editions of Gilbert Burnet's *History* and Anthony Raymond's *History of Ireland*.<sup>84</sup> Historical interests, encompassing ancient Rome and modern Europe, persisted. In the 1750s, he procured Clarendon's *History of the Irish Rebellion* and Ware's *History of the Bishops of*

<sup>82</sup> M. Coghill to E. Southwell, 29 Dec. 1733, BL, Add. MS 21123, ff. 80–1; T. C. Barnard, 'Marsh's Library and the Reading Public', in Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons (eds.), *The Making of Marsh's Library: Learning, Politics and Religion in Ireland, 1650–1750* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 146–62; E. A. Boran, 'The Function of the Library in the Early Seventeenth Century', in Kinane and Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library, Dublin*, 39–52; McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 33–51.

<sup>83</sup> R. C. Cole, 'Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Library Quarterly*, 44 (1974), 119–20.

<sup>84</sup> Edgeworth, accounts, s.d. 3 Dec. 1723, 9 May 1724; NLI, MS 1510, p. 127; 27 March 1724; Alan Harrison, *The Dean's Friend: Anthony Raymond, 1675–1726, Jonathan Swift and the Irish Language* (Blackrock: Eamon De Burca, 1999), 168.

*Ireland*, along with the twenty volumes of the *Universal History* (costing £5 from the Dublin bookseller, John Smith). Next came histories of the revolution in Poland and of the Ottoman Empire. One of Edgeworth's last acquisitions was William Robertson's life of the Emperor Charles V.<sup>85</sup> Keeping abreast of intellectual trends outside Ireland and Britain, he bought a ten-volume set of Voltaire's writings.<sup>86</sup> Manuals gave instruction: in 1734, Edgeworth exchanged a copy of *The Gardener's Calendar*, bought about two months earlier, for the more esteemed *Gardener's Dictionary* of Philip Miller.<sup>87</sup> In 1768, he acquired a treatise on the culture of peach trees.<sup>88</sup> He also bought the diverting, especially once he had children to educate and please. Into this category fell Robinson Crusoe's adventures, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Gil Blas*, and Shadwell's *Plays* (again acquired through subscription).<sup>89</sup> In addition, as in many households of its kind, communal reading took place at Edgeworthstown.<sup>90</sup> Another taste, which had not originated in print but could be sustained by it, was for music. Scores and libretti for Handel's oratorios and operas, some of which Edgeworth had heard in Dublin, were purchased. Printed music allowed him (like Lady Blesington) to carry back to the provinces airs that had entranced him in the capital. Children—and others—were able to perform the latest as well as ancient melodies. Print intertwined not only with musical but also with visual culture. Printed imagery—woodcuts, engravings, and mezzotints—amplified the message of words, as well as decorating a surprisingly large number of Irish homes.<sup>91</sup>

It was not perhaps accidental that Edgeworth chose to be painted in 1757 against a backdrop of books: a setting more usual for bishops.<sup>92</sup> Edgeworth's belief in books as a route to knowledge and thus a justification for collecting them are suggested by his compilation of what became known as 'The black book of Edgeworthstown'. Intended as a guide for his heirs, it mixed fragments of family history and documents thought to be useful to the preservation and enhancement of the property. This testament was never printed. Manuscript as much as print could still be accounted a book. Edgeworth's 'Black Book', laboriously inscribed in manuscript and then accessible only to the initiates, had its counterparts in other Protestant families that

<sup>85</sup> 30 Jan. 1756, 31 Jan. 1758, March 1767.

<sup>86</sup> NLI, MS 1530, p. 223; Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 103, 135, 183.

<sup>87</sup> 31 Dec. 1733; 9 Feb. 1733[4].

<sup>88</sup> 1 Oct. 1768.

<sup>89</sup> April 1720; 25 Oct. 1720; 2 Dec. 1726; 26 June 1732.

<sup>90</sup> Toby Barnard, 'Children and Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in Charles Benson and Siobhán Fitzpatrick (eds.), *That Woman—Studies in Irish Bibliography: A Festschrift for Mary 'Paul' Pollard* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2005), 213–38.

<sup>91</sup> This matter is dealt with in Barnard, *Making the Grand Figure*, 176–87; see also, Stana Nenadic, 'Print Collecting and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *History*, 82 (1997), 203–22.

<sup>92</sup> Reproduced in Nicola Figgis and Brendan Rooney (eds.), *Irish Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland* (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 2001), i. 259.

had settled in Ireland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and which they readily admitted into their collections.<sup>93</sup> Edgeworth's collection was not confined to printed materials: it served several uses. Through it children were steeped in literary traditions that made one write and publish a set of *Memoirs*.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, so deeply imbued was respect for reading that a grand-daughter, Maria Edgeworth, would earn a livelihood through writing for publication.

<sup>93</sup> C. J. F. MacCarthy, 'A Youghal Library of 1707', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 24 (1969), 84–7.

<sup>94</sup> *Memoirs of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, Esq.*, 2 vols. (London, 1820). For the ethos of the family, see Barnard, *A New Anatomy of Ireland*, 45–7; Tom Dunne, '“A Gentleman's Estate Should be a Moral School”: Edgeworthstown in Fact and Fiction, 1760–1840', in Raymond Gillespie and Gerard Moran (eds.), *Longford: Essays in County History* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1991), 95–122. A copy of the Edgeworths' library catalogue, c.1830, is NLI, microfilm, p. 7655.

# Reading Print, 1550–1700

*Raymond Gillespie*

In the century and a half after 1550 printed books became a more common feature of Irish life. The output of the Dublin presses increased, provincial printing was established, and book imports soared. Perhaps most importantly the mechanisms by which those books were distributed into the hands of readers developed significantly. These followed both the enhanced lines of commercial activity and the communication routes created by the state and the church who wished to use the print medium to convey their ideas.<sup>1</sup> Over time, books became part of the smart but casual furnishings of many houses and were objects of display in grand libraries. As a result they might be picked up by the casual browser as well as the serious reader. Thus James Warren claimed that he was converted to Catholicism in 1613 by reading an illicit Catholic book that he discovered in the house of a friend at Donabate in County Dublin.<sup>2</sup> Almost a century later at Templepatrick, County Antrim, in 1702 another man spent time while waiting for a friend's return by reading a Presbyterian sermon book that he had found in the house.<sup>3</sup> Some had books read to them by their family, friends, or neighbours.<sup>4</sup> Others heard books read out in public contexts, most often the Bible read with enthusiasm in Protestant churches on Sundays. The literate and illiterate responded to books in different ways, and divisions between rich and poor, men and women, and urban and rural dwellers were significant enough to determine how they reacted to increased access to the printed word.

Appreciating this diversity of experience is central to understanding how books were received in early modern Ireland. People read for particular reasons and in specific social contexts that shaped their understanding of books. Readings could be emotional and highly subjective but leave few clues

<sup>1</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica*, no. 29 (1995–7), 31–58. The suggestions in this essay will be found in a more developed form in Raymond Gillespie, *Reading Ireland: Print, Reading and Social Change in Early-Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> F. X. Martin, *Friar Nugent* (Rome: Capuchin Historical Institute, 1962), 121.

<sup>3</sup> PRONI, CR4/128/1, f. 190.

<sup>4</sup> Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 33.

for the historian to uncover. Sir John Harington, for instance, reported that in Galway in the 1590s a young lady was so enthusiastic about his newly published translation of *Orlando Furioso* that she read herself to sleep with it. The reason was ‘the verse I think so lively figured her fortune’, she having been jilted by her lover as one of the characters in the text had been.<sup>5</sup> In the 1630s Alice Wandesford, the twelve-year-old daughter of the Irish Lord Deputy, described how she read Luke 2: 49 in which Jesus disputed with the doctors in the temple. According to her account

In the reading of which passage . . . I fell into a serious and deep meditation of the thoughts of Christ’s majesty, divinity and wisdom, who was able to confound the learned doctors and confute their wisdom who were aged, he being so young himself but then twelve years of age. And then I considered my own folly and childish ignorance that I could scarce understand mean and low things without a great deal of teaching and instruction; and although I read the word of God, yet was of a weak capacity to know the way of salvation and therefore in my heart begged my dear Saviour to give me knowledge, wisdom and understanding to guide all my days.<sup>6</sup>

Such ways of reading are hardly strange; yet they do illustrate the sometimes unexpected reactions of readers who come into contact with texts.

## Strategies for Reading

There were a wide variety of strategies for reading in early modern Ireland. A simple document, such as a proclamation or lease, might be read as an uncomplicated narrative that conveyed instructions or information. Read, or heard, its literal meaning was usually simple and uncomplicated. It was probably this sort of reading that the Dublin Independent minister Samuel Mather had in mind when, in a sermon of the 1660s, he spoke of writing being ‘an help to the weakness of memory; for if a thing be written down there it is and a man may recall it by reading when he doth not well remember it’.<sup>7</sup> Longer works, such as books or pamphlets, required different reading strategies. Books were rarely read as distinct items but usually within the context of other books or cultural referents that made their meaning clear. The Catholic Bishop of Ferns, Nicholas French, recorded at the beginning of his 1679 tract *The Bleeding Iphigenia* how some years earlier he had read a printed account of the abjuration of Catholicism by Andrew Sall in 1674,

as I was reading with great attention Sall’s abjuration I call’d to mind that great red dragon whose tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth

<sup>5</sup> N. McClure (ed.), *The Letters and Epigrams of Sir John Harington* (Philadelphia, 1930), 74.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Jackson (ed.), *The Autobiography of Mrs Alice Thornton* (Durham: Surtees Society, 1875), 13.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Mather, *The Figures or Types of the Old Testament* (Dublin, 1683), 45.

(Apoc. cap 12). And then I said to myself, the tail of an infernal beast had cast this Sall to the earth out of a little heaven (*The state of religion*) wherein for a time he shined like a small star in virtue and learning.<sup>8</sup>

In this case the Bible provided a context for Bishop French's reading. In another case a later seventeenth-century reader of Sir John Temple's 1646 *History of the Irish Rebellion*, probably a Henry Echlin in 1674, annotated his copy '2 Nalson page 8 of introduction suspistion of our authors partiality'.<sup>9</sup> Here is an indication that the reading of two historical works, those of Temple and John Nalson, together provided a context for understanding each of them.

This kind of informed reading was, at one level, restricted to those who had access to a well-stocked library or had a retentive memory for what they read. However, this technique of reading was not restricted to that group. Such reading was also characteristic of the way in which one of the most common texts in Protestant Ireland, the Bible, was read. Here commentaries, both scholarly volumes and broadsheets, were available to make the meaning of the text clear.<sup>10</sup> A different interpretation might be possible if people read in groups as some did. Groups of Presbyterian clergy in Ulster in the early eighteenth century bought books that they read individually and then met to discuss their content. Somewhat similarly in Dublin during the 1690s the rules of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners required that members waiting for a meeting to begin were to talk about 'what good books they have seen and read'. The results of such reading activity were not always the confirmation of orthodoxy. In the 1670s a number of Quakers at Chapelizod, near Dublin, were expelled from the meeting for heterodox views formed by the reading and communal discussion of one book that had been passed among the group.<sup>11</sup> However, such group interpretations, in discussion or by wide reading, were not necessary to extract the full meaning from a text in the reformed churches. In the case of the Bible many Protestants believed that the key to understanding Scripture was the Bible itself. The fragmentation of the biblical text through the numbering of verses encouraged many to produce highly individualized understandings of the text by juxtaposing verses from different parts of Scripture as a way of ascertaining their true meaning, and hence provide a context for understanding the meaning of any one verse. One Dublin Presbyterian preacher encouraged this method of

<sup>8</sup> Nicholas French, *The Bleeding Ifigenia; Unkind Deserter and The Sale and Settlement of Ireland*, ed. S. H. B[indon] (Dublin, 1848), 11.

<sup>9</sup> Copy of Temple now TCD, RR II 64.

<sup>10</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Reading the Bible in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 22–3.

<sup>11</sup> Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 54; B. Scroggs, *A Sermon Preached before the Religious Societies in the City of Dublin on the 29th of September 1695* (Dublin, 1695, ESTC R229819), 39.



reading, urging his catechumens to ‘be very diligent in comparing one text with another’.<sup>12</sup>

The picture of reading in early modern Ireland drawn from this evidence is, inevitably, a very fragmented one. Reading could often be personal, highly subjective, heavily influenced by immediate cultural and personal context, and hence difficult for historians to reconstruct in any meaningful way. It almost seems that no two readings of a text could be identical. Sir John Harington, for instance, recorded that when he read from his translation of *Orlando Furioso* to Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone, in 1599, ‘I turned (as it had been by chance) to the beginning of the 45th canto . . . which he seemed to like so well that he solemnly swore his boys should read all the book to him’.<sup>13</sup> Tyrone undoubtedly did not understand the forty-fifth canto of *Orlando*, which deals with rebellious subjects, in the same way as Harington; yet, both seemed content with their own reading of the text. As the vitriolic New English pamphleteer Barnaby Rich, then resident in Dublin, commented about political writing in 1617, ‘we are grown wise and sharp sighted in reading other men’s writings that in those passages that are but meant and set down in a general manner, they will draw such particular construction as the author himself never so much dreamt on’.<sup>14</sup> Clearly there was much diversity in how men and women read their books, but despite this it is possible to detect some general patterns of reading that contemporaries thought appropriate, though clearly these were subject to multiple variations to suit context and backgrounds.

## Genres of Reading

The first way of approaching the social rules of reading in the early modern world is to attempt to reconstruct the sort of rules for reading that contemporaries applied to the different sorts of books available to them (Figure 7). It was widely accepted that different types of books required different approaches. Practical works, such as almanacs, were probably not ever read through but merely consulted from time to time. It appears from surviving almanacs, usually from the luxury end of the market with leather bindings, that they were kept for long periods of time because they frequently contain notes inserted in the volume at widely dispersed dates.<sup>15</sup> Whereas some material in an almanac, such as the prognostications and astronomical

<sup>12</sup> Gillespie, ‘Reading the Bible’, 28–9.

<sup>13</sup> McClure, *Letters and Epigrams*, 77.

<sup>14</sup> Barnaby Rich, *The Irish Hubbub or the English Hue and Cry* (London, 1617, ESTC S123260), sigs. A3–A3v.

<sup>15</sup> This is based on the large collection of seventeenth-century Irish almanacs in the Gilbert collection in Dublin City Library, Pearse Street.



7. Reading a proclamation, from James Cranford, *The Teares of Ireland* (1647). Cranford's engraving provides a rare illustration of the communal reading of an official printed document such as were displayed in public places in Ireland throughout the seventeenth century. Such group readings, whether in public or private, helped to shape interpretations of central texts.

information, had a limited lifespan, much of the standard content, such as the list of regnal years, dates of markets, medical advice, and hints for agricultural improvement, could have an indefinite one. The useful life of an almanac may well have been five or ten years before it disintegrated and had to be replaced. Other types of secular literature were probably read more systematically. Both secular and confutational works could be read quickly to extract their essence either for entertainment or with a view to participating in controversy. The Lord Deputy's secretary in the 1630s, George Radcliffe, wrote to Bishop John Bramhall of Derry of his excitement at the arrival in Dublin of a Cambridge-printed work of Arminian theology, adding 'I am very desirous to read the book which I got but this evening and therefore, it being now past 9 o'clock I shall bid your lordship goodnight'.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, Radcliffe in his enthusiasm for his new acquisition wanted to become acquainted with its contents as soon as possible. Others urged more caution with different types of works. Sir James Perrot in his *Chronicle of Ireland*

<sup>16</sup> Edward Berwick (ed.), *The Rawdon Papers* (London, 1819), 23.

written at the beginning of the seventeenth century urged the case for a more considered reading of historical works since ‘the monuments and mirrors of times past, the directions of things present and foresight of the future are no way better discerned than by diligent reading of histories well and judicially written’. In Perrot’s view contemporary history was better than ancient history and more relevant. The reading of such history was essentially a practical exercise since ‘the use of reading histories is two fold: either private for a man’s particular knowledge and information or public for the application of it to the service of the state’.<sup>17</sup> Reading history was therefore a practical exercise that required time and the careful extracting of underlying meanings from what was read rather than a mere summary of arguments or events. The Irish Lord Deputy in the 1630s, Christopher Wandesford, likewise instructed his son:

read not histories for your delight only or for the vain glory of being able to discourse of them, but to be bettered by the instances that you find in them. For to what end are the examples of former times delivered unto us but that after ages may reject the vicious and gather up by imitation the virtuous example of those that lived before them.

Similarly, in the case of the law Wandesford recommended that his son should be thoroughly acquainted with it ‘in reading and digesting them’, suggesting a slow careful reading, possibly with note taking.<sup>18</sup>

If a diverse range of social rules were applied to the reading of secular works, the reading of religious works, by both Protestants and Catholics, produced a more coherent set of practices. Godly books were held to convey special messages and hence had to be read in a particular way. One early seventeenth-century Irish judge, Sir Charles Calthorpe, noted in his commonplace book on the subject of ‘reading godly books’:

by reading and hearing these godly books and exhortations God speaketh and talketh to us as by preaching and prophecy we speak and talk to God but this reading and hearing must be with sincerity, attended and abounded with godly grace, His spirit dressed our understanding with due regard to the matter which we hear or read.<sup>19</sup>

Catholics of a Tridentine cast of mind, too, urged godly reading of pious books, and the rules for a Catholic sodality in Dublin in 1703 emphasized the importance of not only reading pious books but meditating on them frequently. The same message was conveyed by a number of Catholic books

<sup>17</sup> Sir James Perrot, *The Chronicle of Ireland, 1584–1608*, ed. Herbert Wood (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1933), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Comber (ed.), *A Book of Instructions Written by the Rt. Hon. Sir Christopher Wandesford* (Cambridge, 1777, ESTC T110256), 18, 69.

<sup>19</sup> TCD, MS 676, p. 493.

on sale in the shop of William Weston in Dublin during the late 1680s.<sup>20</sup> The expectations that some had of this sort of godly reading are suggested by the preface to a 1673 Dublin reissue of Francis de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life* written by the Anglican Henry Dodwell, who had also suitably Protestantized the text. His preface was intended to 'prepare the reader for the book' so that the reader would approach the task of reading this pious work not as he or she would approach the reading of other works, giving them only a cursory glance. According to Dodwell this would be unfruitful and 'endeavours of a practical persuasion and suitable affections' were required since the reader was to be more concerned with the 'edification of their affections' rather than 'informing their understanding'. Godly books needed to be read slowly and frequently so that the various meanings, moral and metaphysical as well as literal, of the stories presented could be understood. The godly reader was to be an attentive reader rather than a casual one, deploying not only the intellect but the emotions also.<sup>21</sup>

In one case it is possible to see something of this godly reader at work. In the middle of the 1660s James Barry from Dublin, then a youth of fifteen, began to take religion seriously through reading the Bible. Brought up in the Church of Ireland he turned to books as a way of discovering God's will. He observed, 'I became very bookish, looking into almost every book where ever I came to try whether I cold meet with any help which might forward me in my new trade of religion'. Daily he retreated into seclusion to read and meditate on what he read. His stock of reading matter included most of the classic devotional works of the early seventeenth century. He soon found a copy of Richard Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*, 'the which I did no sooner open but its title page invited my fancy to make choice of it for my chief companion . . . the more oftener I read it the more I was enamoured with it'.<sup>22</sup> Barry's reading has all the marks of the godly reader at work with his immersion in a text that was read frequently, new insights being found on each reading.

## Textual Communities

Analysis of reading practices by literary genre is one way of drawing together reading practices. A second way of understanding how people read their books is by considering what may be termed 'textual communities'. Although

<sup>20</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Catholic Religious Cultures in the Diocese of Dublin, 1614–97', in James Kelly and Dáire Keogh (eds.), *History of the Catholic Diocese of Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 134–5.

<sup>21</sup> Francis de Sales, *An Introduction to the Devout Life*, ed. Henry Dodwell (Dublin, 1673, ESTC R177247), sigs. a5v–f4v.

<sup>22</sup> James Barry, *A Reviving Cordial for a Sin-Sick, Despairing Soul in the Time of Temptation* (2nd edn.?, Edinburgh, 1722, ESTC T63334), 23.

some of the books available in early modern Ireland were open to diverse and complex interpretations by individuals, reading was not always an individual activity either physically or intellectually. People read texts in groups and they managed to agree on common interpretations of certain key texts around which they built their lives. Sometimes this was the result of reading in groups assembled in one place, as discussed earlier, but more often it was the result of a religious or other group fixing on the meaning of one or two central texts, relating others to them and conveying this style of reading to their adherents. As Samuel Mather commented, writing was a God-given gift ‘for the further propagation and diffusion of the Light: for there may be opportunity of writing to persons absent and in after times who may read, when they have not the opportunity of hearing’.<sup>23</sup> Readers did not have to be in close proximity to understand each others’ reading styles.

The point is clearest in relation to religious texts. Undoubtedly the Bible became a central text for all religious groupings in Ireland but each devised different strategies for reading it. Catholics tended to stress the reading of a narrative whereas dissenters promoted a more fragmented reading of the text.<sup>24</sup> In the case of the Church of Ireland a further web of books and advice that helped to shape particular ways of reading was spun around the Bible. In the early seventeenth century James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, offered advice on how, when, and to what effect the Bible was to be read.<sup>25</sup> Late in the century Jeremy Taylor, Bishop of Down and Connor, likewise created a web of works of Church of Ireland divinity around the Bible. Significantly he saw this list not as an end product but as a starting point, instructing the two Dublin men to whom it was directed as follows:

in reading these authors I have recommended to you pray observe what quotations they have that thereby you may perceive what authors they made use of and especially read for ‘tis likely that they are the best books. Many books are not useful.<sup>26</sup>

Distinctive confessional patterns of reading could be established by such means.

Although such widespread reading was confined to those who had access to significant libraries or the leisure to undertake it the same process worked for those with more modest means and on a smaller scale. The Bible might be spun together with a few central texts, such as the hymn book in dissent, the catechism in Catholicism, or the *Book of Common Prayer* in the case of the

<sup>23</sup> Mather, *Figures or Types*, 45.

<sup>24</sup> Gillespie, ‘Reading the Bible’.

<sup>25</sup> Elizabethanne Boran, ‘Reading Theology within the Community of Believers: James Ussher’s “Directions”’, in Cunningham and Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives*, 39–59.

<sup>26</sup> Colin McKelvie (ed.), ‘Jeremy Taylor’s Recommendations for a Library of Anglican Theology (1660)’, *Irish Booklover*, 4 (1978–80), 102.

Church of Ireland. Such texts when read together reinforced the particular interpretation of each. Moreover the liturgical nature of some of these books, such as the *Book of Common Prayer* and the hymn book, meant that they had a wide audience. The *Book of Common Prayer*, for instance, seems to have had a wide distribution in Ireland as a book but even this is a poor measure of how many people knew its contents and could apply them. For those who attended church on Sunday the liturgical performance, or hearing of the book, was of some importance because it provided the context for other readings or hearings since here oral and textual worlds crossed. Moreover the text could also be used in households as part of family prayers. Finally, those who had mastered the technical skill of reading could use it as a devotional aid by themselves although even here there may be doubts about the literacy of some of those that bought books: in the 1680s one Dublin stationer offered an illustrated edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*, suggesting that the image rather than the word might be used for meditation.<sup>27</sup> Such a process suggests that the social rules of reading that bonded a group of people around a text allowed for the inclusion of both scholars and those technically illiterate, but reading, in the widest sense, linked them together into a 'textual community'.

Whereas this sort of argument for the social rules of reading is clear in the case of religion it is perhaps less obvious in other areas. One indication that it is present is that authors felt the need to include an address 'To the reader' in their works. Over the seventeenth century in Ireland these lengthened considerably, dwarfing the dedicatory prefaces and setting out the way in which the work that followed was to be read in line with authorial intention. The same strategy, by author or printer, is also clear from the use of typography in some works. The format of a catechism composed by the minister of Larne, Thomas Hall, comprised not only the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly but also 'questions raised from the answers of the catechism', although these were probably of lesser importance to judge from the typography. The largest font was reserved for the text of the Shorter Catechism with smaller type sizes and italics being used for the subsidiary questions.<sup>28</sup> Thus the catechism became not simply a means of ensuring religious understanding by means of repetition of simple questions and answers but it also became a text for the setting out of more complicated theological and confessional positions.

<sup>27</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Lay Spirituality and Worship, 1558–1750: Holy Books and Godly Readers', in Raymond Gillespie and W. G. Neely (eds.), *The Laity and the Church of Ireland, 1000–2000* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 140–6.

<sup>28</sup> Thomas Hall, *A Plain and Easy Explication of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism* (Edinburgh, 1692, ESTC R235773), sig. A2v. The same is true of Thomas Lye, *A Plain and Familiar Method of Instructing the Younger Sort* (Dublin, 1683, ESTC R216822): p. 6 explains the rationale for the typography, the most important words being those in blackest print.

One important example of this creation of a political and ecclesiastic ‘textual community’ around particular groups of books read in the same way is the treatment of Sir John Temple’s 1646 work *The History of the Irish Rebellion*. As a book it did not have a particularly large readership but as the focus of an elite and popular political sentiment it was of some importance.<sup>29</sup> Its significance resulted from a process similar to that described for the Church of Ireland community linked by a group of books being read together. Perhaps the best way to understand how this happened is to consider the sermons preached on 23 October, the day appointed in the late seventeenth century for thanksgiving for deliverance from the hands of the insurrectionists. These sermons were themselves sometimes disseminated in print. Temple’s work was used by preachers in 23 October sermons, and in that way some sections of the text may have become familiar to a wide audience. The liturgy constructed for the 23 October celebrations and the 1662 act that authorized it, which was read on 23 October in parish churches and included in the *Book of Common Prayer*, provided the main context for the reading of Temple’s work. In particular it resolved ambiguities in Temple’s interpretation of the events of the 1640s. Whereas the *Irish Rebellion* was explicit that the rising was a punishment for sin Temple did not specify the nature of that sin. Nevertheless he strongly implied that the sin was the toleration of Catholicism. In such a context the King, as an agent of toleration, was deemed guilty and some of the preachers in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, made exactly this point in the 1640s. Similar sentiments may have led to the accusations of treason against Temple in 1643. However, the liturgy shifted the emphasis in this interpretation by defining the sin not as one of the state but as a multitude of personal sins. According to the liturgy the judgement of God was brought on Ireland by ‘our neglect and contempt of thy sacred ordinances, our vain and false swearing . . . our unchristian charitableness and shameful intemperance, our sacrilege and covetousness, hypocrisy, slandering and deep security in the midst of all our sins and dangers’. Such an explanation allowed a reading of Temple that emphasized corporate repentance for personal sin. This allowed the message to be controlled and the text read in a particular way. For this reason many of the sermons preached on 23 October came to have almost a ritualistic quality, emphasizing the same framework for understanding massacre and deliverance. In such ways might large audiences become acquainted with an approved version of the ideas presented in Temple’s *Irish Rebellion* and understand them in the context of reading, seeing, or hearing part of the contents of another book, the *Book of Common Prayer*.

<sup>29</sup> For what follows see Raymond Gillespie, ‘Temple’s Fate: Reading the *Irish Rebellion* in the Seventeenth Century’, in Ciaran Brady and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds.), *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 315–33.

Dealing with the books that flowed off the printing press and from the holds of ships into early modern Ireland was not a simple business. Individuals could read on a wide range of levels and in different social contexts. Technical reading skill also varied widely; although by the end of the seventeenth century this was probably a fairly widespread skill, the ability to write was more restricted. If one could not read, there were those who might read aloud the relevant document. This, however, involved trusting the reader with information about land or trade that could prove valuable and hence raise the problem of fraud. A more important, and probably more widespread, skill was knowing how to use books and especially knowing the social rules attaching to reading. Some of these were conventions surrounding the way particular genres were read but there were also social rules that determined how books could be used to bind together specific groups based on particular ways of reading texts. This did not depend on mere technical proficiency since the illiterate could come into contact with books they could use through public readings or performances of those works, liturgical works being a prime example. Books such as the Bible, the *Book of Common Prayer*, and John Temple's history of the Irish rebellion when read together in a number of ways within a common frame of reference came to shape the thoughts of many of those who lived in early modern Ireland.



# Reading Print, 1700–1800

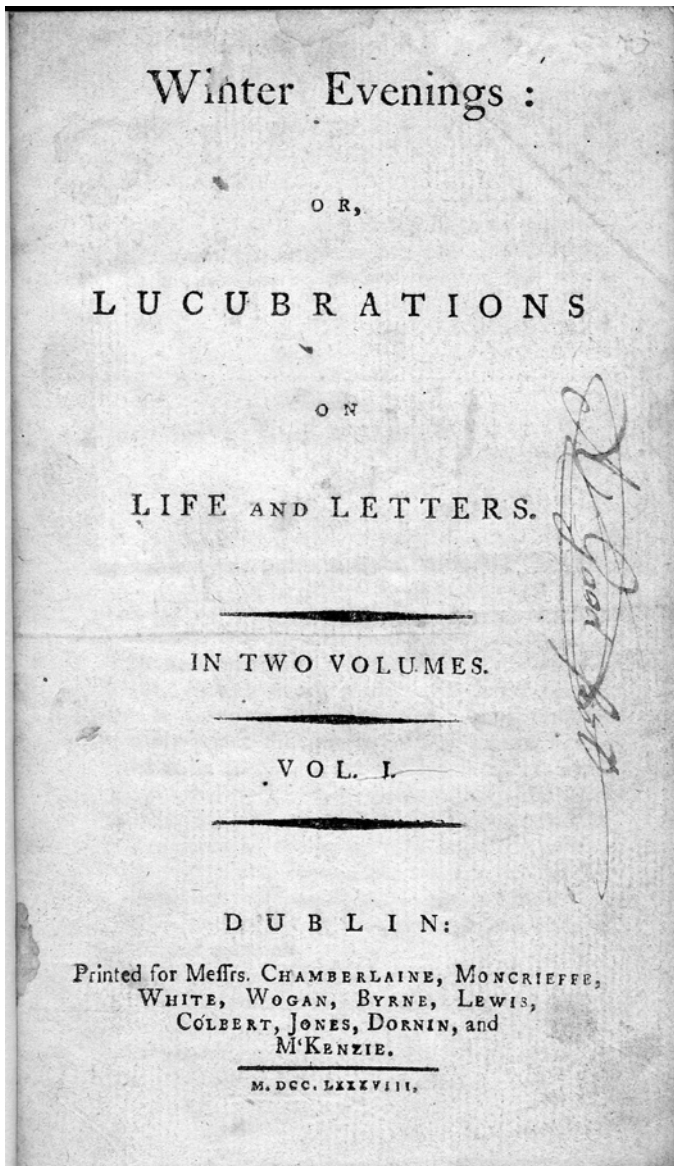
Máire Kennedy

How can we assess the way in which books were received by their readers? A tantalizing comment written on the title page of a Dublin publication of 1788, *Winter Evenings: or, Lucubrations on Life and Letters*, proclaims ‘A good read’; the hand seems to be contemporary and is probably that of an adult (see Figure 8).<sup>1</sup> Who enjoyed this book and when? Was it their own, or borrowed from a friend or a circulating library? Was it meant as a recommendation to others, or just a spontaneous response to a satisfactory experience of reading? The evidence for reading is obscure and fragmentary, difficult to uncover and even more difficult to interpret. It is impossible to generalize the experience of reading; the evidence is, by its nature, specific, therefore it is imperative to identify and record the common characteristics of a wide range of reading experiences. We would like to discover whether reading took place in company or alone, whether it was silent or aloud, and whether an audience listened passively or participated. Until recently most studies on the history of Irish books have concentrated on matters of book production and distribution.<sup>2</sup> As a result of the inherent difficulties associated with the recovery of past reading practices and the reception of texts, this work is only beginning.<sup>3</sup> The initial stages of a study of the reception of books in Ireland may come

<sup>1</sup> Vicesimus Knox, *Winter Evenings: or, Lucubrations on Life and Letters* (Dublin, 1788, ESTC N35869) (Dublin City Public Libraries copy).

<sup>2</sup> Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); eadem, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000); James W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800: A Bibliographical Enquiry* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998); Vincent Kinane, *A History of the Dublin University Press, 1734–1976* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1994); Dermot McGuinne, *Irish Type Design: a History of Printing Types in the Irish Character* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992); J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man: Popular Culture in Ulster 1700–1900* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1987); Gerard Long (ed.), *Books Beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> Bernadette Cunningham, and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland and Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1999).



8. Vicesimus Knox, *Winter Evenings* (1788).

down to the accumulation of individual responses, covering a broad spectrum of social classes, educational levels, and age groups, which will point to the diversity of ways in which readers chose their reading and reacted to the subjects read. A reader's response to certain authors or subjects may change over time: the response of a young man or woman to an author such as

Rousseau, to lyric poetry, or to romantic tales may not be the same for that reader twenty years later.

If we look at the reader as part of the communications circuit, we see his/her crucial role, not just as ‘end user’ in the book production line, the recipient of a commodity created by an author, edited, typeset, printed, bound, and distributed by wholesale dealer, bookseller, circulating library, shopkeeper, or pedlar, but as someone who could influence how that commodity is produced, how many copies will be printed, in what format or binding, which titles will be published and sold, and how they will be advertised and otherwise promoted; indeed the reader may become an author and create a text influenced by his/her own reading. If we can learn how the reader related to the text, discover if it was a two-way relationship, we might be able to see how it could have affected authorial endeavour. Much is made of the reader by authors and publishers, prefaces are often headed ‘To the reader’. Subscription editions have a particularly close relationship with the purchaser or reader, as subscriptions were very often gathered through personal contacts. In the ‘Advertisement’ to her novel *Eva* (1795), Anna Milliken thanks her subscription collectors, ‘her most grateful acknowledgements to those friends, who have so kindly exerted themselves in her favour, as to enable her to produce the following list, without having recourse to the public prints’.<sup>4</sup>

The inability to read did not cut the individual off from the written word. Reading aloud in public and private spaces allowed a whole group of listeners to participate. This was particularly the case in church where the word of God, in the printed Scriptures, was made available to all. The literate world could reach every level of society irrespective of the individual skills of its members. Newspapers read aloud in taverns or other public places, letters read aloud in company, songs sung or recited by chapmen or women on street corners or at fairs to advertise the sale of printed song sheets equally reached non-readers, and allowed them to be part of a literate culture. The overlap between oral and printed culture is evident in the case of songs and ballads where each feeds into the other: the oral being printed and frozen into a fixed form, the printed being sung and changed to suit circumstances or conditions. During times of intense political upheaval the printed word came into its own to transmit oral speeches, debates, and proclamations. Newspapers carried reports of parliamentary sessions, relaying speeches in full. Pamphlets were rushed out to supplement or substitute for newspaper reports, or to engage in public debate; ‘pamphlet wars’ were a phenomenon of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Scores of pamphlets were issued in 1798 and 1799 in support of, and in opposition to, the proposed union

<sup>4</sup> Anna Milliken, *Eva: an Old Irish Story* (Cork, 1795, ESTCT119330), ‘Advertisement’.

between the British and Irish parliaments.<sup>5</sup> Multiple editions, produced in close succession, are typical of these pamphlets. Provincial reprints of Dublin-printed pamphlets were produced to satisfy demand. Subscribers to the *Cork Advertiser* were presented with free copies of the speeches, which accompanied the paper, or could be got 'on application to the office.'<sup>6</sup> William Carleton tells that when he was ten years old (about 1804) he knew *The Battle of Aughrim* off by heart from repeated readings. Because of this, non-readers, Catholic and Protestant, got him to teach them their parts for amateur productions of the play staged in barns in his native Clogher. This play, written by Robert Ashton and first printed in 1756, attained immense popularity in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; in Carleton's time the printed version was used as a schoolbook. In this way literate and non-literate amateur actors played to packed houses of the literate and non-literate.<sup>7</sup>

## Access to Books

Access to books remained uneven throughout the eighteenth century, limited as it was by the ability to read, the cost and availability of books, the existence of space and leisure to read, and the absence of a culture of reading in many quarters. Questions of language and reading ability in English and Irish have concerned scholars in Ireland for several decades; however, a dearth of reliable and wide-ranging data has made assessments problematic.<sup>8</sup> The earliest comprehensive figures are derived from the census of 1841, nearly half a century after the period under discussion. Using Ó Ciosáin's projections back from 1841 to the mid-eighteenth century, literacy figures for males over 16 years increased from 50 to 55 per cent from mid- to late century, while figures for females rose from over 30 to 34 per cent in the same period.<sup>9</sup> These percentages disguise major regional differences, and more significantly, ethnic and economic variations. The need for adult literacy was greatest in an urban context, where all dealings with commercial and civil institutions

<sup>5</sup> W. J. McCormack, *The Pamphlet Debate on the Union between Great Britain and Ireland 1797–1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> *Cork Advertiser*, 21 May 1799; 18 June 1799.

<sup>7</sup> William Carleton, *The Life of William Carleton: Being his Autobiography and Letters and an Account of his Life and Writings* . . . , ed. David J. O'Donoghue, 2 vols. (London: Downey and Co., 1896), i. 25.

<sup>8</sup> Brian Ó Cuív, *Irish Dialects and Irish-Speaking Districts* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1951); Garret Fitzgerald, 'Estimates for Baronies of Minimum Level of Irish-Speaking amongst Successive Decennial Cohorts: 1771–1781 to 1861–1871', *PRIA*, 84C (1984), 117–55; Mary Daly and David Dickson (eds.), *The Origins of Popular Literacy in Ireland: Language Change and Educational Development 1700–1920* (Dublin: Department of Modern History, Trinity College, Dublin, and Department of Irish History, University College Dublin, 1990); Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture*, 38.

required a degree of literacy in English. Among the majority of the population living in the countryside literacy was not a particular asset below a certain socio-economic status, and a knowledge of English need not have seemed desirable. At the assizes held in County Meath from 1775 to 1826 interpreters were employed to represent defendants whose language was Irish.<sup>10</sup> The ability to read among nearly 50 per cent of adults in the second half of the century is not to be equated with the practice of reading. Many may have been able to master the proclamations posted up about the cities and towns, to decipher the shop signs and advertising that increasingly became a feature of urban life, and to navigate their way through the familiar texts of Scripture, or the simple narratives of chapbooks and street ballads.

Advanced reading ability and comprehension was necessary to cope with the literary and historical productions issuing from Dublin bookshops and printing houses from the early years of the eighteenth century. This degree of reading literacy was acquired through prolonged schooling allied to practical application in perfecting the skill. There was a growing availability of education during the eighteenth century, although access remained restricted. From the early years of the century those living in Dublin could visit the city's many bookshops, and privileged individuals could gain access to research libraries: fellows to the library of Trinity College, graduates and gentlemen to Marsh's library, founded in 1701, and members to the library of the Royal Irish Academy after 1785. Economic status played a major role in providing the space and leisure in which to practise the skill of reading. The evolution of a culture of reading can be discerned from the early to the late century. The perception of the poor state of this culture is succinctly summed up by *The Tribune* in 1729: 'many of our gentry seem to think learning not only a needless, but an impertinent qualification . . . the state of conversation among us is such, as to require a well furnish'd wine-cellar, much more than a library for its support'.<sup>11</sup> Auction notices from mid-century, however, indicate that books played an increased role in country life. In the last two decades of the century books and libraries frequently featured in country house sales, attesting to an increase in book ownership as reading became a cultural activity noted with approval by commentators in the second half of the century. Living in Tipperary in the 1770s and 1780s the Herbert family had no difficulty in surrounding themselves with books. Dorothea tells us:

Parson Young at this time made me a present of 8 volumes of the Spectator bound in red leather, gilt. A valuable edition not to be had in print. Mr Cuffe gave me Lord Lyttleton's History of England and many other small books. Mr Rankin gave me Rasselas Prince of Abyssinia. Mrs English a set of pocket Voyages and Travels and

<sup>10</sup> John Brady, 'Irish Interpreters at Meath Assizes', *Riocht na Midhe*, 2 (1) (1959), 62–3.

<sup>11</sup> *The Tribune*, ed. by Patrick Delany (Dublin, 1729, ESTC T135906), 72–3.

Mrs Larry Smyth the Death of Abel. With this little library and my Bible and French books I laid the foundation of my future erudition.<sup>12</sup>

By the eighteenth century books were imported from London and the Continent, there was a thriving secondhand trade based on importations and the dispersal of private libraries, and local printing became a major feature of the Irish book trade. In the region of 25,700 editions of books, pamphlets, and papers printed in Ireland have survived from the period 1700 to 1800.<sup>13</sup> Edition sizes are unknown for most of the century. Books published by subscription by less-well-known authors had perhaps the smallest print runs, often needing only one to two hundred subscribers to go to print. Schoolbooks, chapbooks, and devotional texts, aimed at the popular market and the country trade, achieved the largest print runs, amounting to several thousand copies. The ledgers of the Graisberry printing house show print runs of one to five thousand copies of schoolbook titles printed from the 1770s to the early 1800s and from six to ten thousand for *Catechisms*.<sup>14</sup> In opposition to the proposed Stamp Act in 1773 the *Freeman's Journal's* correspondent confirmed that 'the greatest consumption of books, here, is in our publick schools'; he warned, 'if that tax, therefore, be imposed on them no man of low or middling fortune will be able to afford his children a liberal education'.<sup>15</sup> Dublin and London newspapers were supplied to the country towns by post from the end of the seventeenth century, and as local newspaper publishing expanded after mid-century, newspapers and periodicals were distributed by post and by private carriers.<sup>16</sup> Throughout the century booksellers used the book catalogue as a means of reaching a dispersed reading public.

Books cost less in Dublin than in London. Dublin printers were able to undercut their London rivals by reprinting in smaller formats, using cheaper paper, and not needing to purchase copyright. Advertisers were careful to point out the saving achieved by the purchase of an Irish edition, usually claiming that the production was as good, if not better, than the London edition. Certain titles, whose popularity was assured, were produced in a range of formats and bindings to suit different pockets. The *Letters of Swift*, edited by John Wilkes, were published by George Faulkner in 1767; the

<sup>12</sup> Dorothea Herbert, *Retrospections*, 2 vols. (London: Gerald Howe, 1929–30), i. 35.

<sup>13</sup> Information taken from ESTC.

<sup>14</sup> Vincent Kinane and Charles Benson, 'Some Late 18th- and Early 19th-Century Dublin Printers' Account Books: The Graisberry Ledgers', in Peter Isaac (ed.), *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), 139–50. TCD, MS 10314, Daniel Graisberry's Ledger 1777–1785; MS 10315, Ledger of Graisberry and Campbell 1797–1806.

<sup>15</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 27–30 November 1773.

<sup>16</sup> Máire Kennedy, 'Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Publishing in Munster and South Leinster', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 103 (1998), 67–88.

three-volume sets were issued in three sizes, octavo, duodecimo, and in eighteens, each set to match the thirteen volumes of *Works* already published.<sup>17</sup> Small format books, very much a feature of the Irish book trade, meant more affordability for the reader; plays, novels, poetry, and books of travels printed in duodecimo could be carried easily in a pocket or by hand, and this encouraged reading mobility. Almanacs, giving useful information on tides and phases of the moon, and dates of fairs countrywide, and providing listings of persons involved with civil, cultural, and educational institutions, often doubled as notebooks, and could be kept in the pocket for easy access to this information.

Religious works and sermons were frequently sold at wholesale rates to encourage the pious to purchase them for the poor. Edward Exshaw advertised his list of religious titles at Easter 1742 as ‘books very proper to be given away at this season’, offering an allowance to those who intended to distribute them free. Again at Easter 1749 his successors, Sarah and John Exshaw, offered a selection of titles at a discount to those who would give them away to poor families and children ‘at this holy season’.<sup>18</sup> Hannah More counselled ladies to make it ‘an indispensable part of their charity to give moral and religious books’ to the poor.<sup>19</sup> When Charlotte Brooke’s *School for Christians*, aimed at children, was published by subscription in 1791, a small number of subscribers, thirty-six persons, took over 600 copies of the book.<sup>20</sup> Apart from one bookseller taking fifty copies, the nobility and clergy who took multiple copies may have had the dual objective of supporting a deserving author and acquiring suitable reading matter for distribution among the less fortunate.

Advertising played a prominent part in book sales, newspapers regularly carrying book advertising from the late 1720s. Newspaper circulation ensured a ready set of contacts for the sale of books in smaller towns. Books were advertised in a number of different ways: by targeting an audience, by quoting the approbation of eminent persons, by comparison with celebrated works of literature, by aesthetic considerations, or by invoking the good value and cheap cost of the work. Similar titles, geared towards a common interest, could be advertised together; for example in the 1780s Luke White took out separate advertisements for selections of foreign language books, books of voyages and travels, medical treatises, and his own publications in Irish history.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Freeman’s Journal*, 24–28 February 1767.

<sup>18</sup> *Dublin News Letter*, 6–10 April 1742; *Dublin Courant*, 4–8 April 1749.

<sup>19</sup> Hannah More, *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (Dublin, 1799, ESTCT155772), 126.

<sup>20</sup> Charlotte Brooke, *School for Christians: In Dialogues for the Use of Children* (Dublin, 1791, ESTC T104982).

<sup>21</sup> For foreign language books: *Freeman’s Journal*, 1–4 January 1785; 20–3 January 1787; *Volunteer’s Journal*, 27 July 1785. Medical books: *Freeman’s Journal*, 8–10 June 1784; *Volunteer’s Journal*, 14 June 1784. Voyages: *Dublin Chronicle*, 1 May 1787. Irish history: *Freeman’s Journal*, 18–20 January 1787. Trade and commerce: *Volunteer’s Journal*, 12 April 1784.

The publication in 1749 of Richard Hayes' *The Negociator's Magazine* was aimed at 'merchants and traders, entirely necessary to those who would understand merchants accounts', and *The Sailor's Companion*, advertised with Henry Ellis's *A Voyage to Hudson's Bay*, targeted readers of travel books with 'a dictionary explaining the sea terms, very necessary in reading books of voyages'.<sup>22</sup> John Rutt's *Natural History of Dublin* was advertised in 1773 as 'a work of use to philosophers, physicians, gentlemen, farmers and manufacturers'.<sup>23</sup> In an advertisement for Lord Chesterfield's *Letters* in 1775 potential readers were informed that the substance of the letters 'at present form the conversation amongst all polite companies'. Great claims were made for the volume 'containing every instruction necessary to complete the gentleman and man of fashion, to teach him a knowledge of life, and make him well received in all companies'.<sup>24</sup>

When Fielding Ould, master of the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin, published *A New Treatise on Midwifery* in 1742, it came with the 'approbation of the president and censors of the college of physicians'. The volume was considered 'not only useful to young practitioners in the art, but to the female sex in general, but more especially to women who live in the country, remote from the assistance of skillful persons'.<sup>25</sup> *The Gardener's Dictionary* was published by subscription in Dublin in 1764; the credentials of its author, Philip Miller, were cited in the advertisement 'F.R.S., gardener to the worshipful company of apothecaries, at their botanick garden in Chelsea, and member of the botanick academy at Florence'.<sup>26</sup> The advertisement for John Entick's *New Spelling Dictionary* quoted a letter from Dr John Stirling to the publisher, congratulating the author on the merit of the work, recommending it to 'the public esteem', praising its portable size and cheapness, and promising to 'use my best endeavours to promote the sale of it among my friends'.<sup>27</sup> Cervantes' novel *Persiles and Sigismunda* was published in Dublin by Oliver Nelson in 1741. In the advertising campaign Nelson used an extract from Bayle's *General Historical Dictionary* to praise its inventiveness and style: 'this performance is of a better invention, more artificial contrivance, and of a more sublime style than that of Don Quixote de la Mancha', thus assuming that his target audience knew and appreciated *Don Quixote*.<sup>28</sup>

We do not know how successful this advertising was, but booksellers continued to target potential readers in this manner throughout the century. The newspaper played an important role in eighteenth-century Ireland, penetrating into the very heart of the countryside, bringing news and advertising, and opening up rural Ireland to broader ideas and to an awareness of the

<sup>22</sup> *Dublin Courant*, 21–4 January 1748/9.

<sup>24</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 14–16 March 1775.

<sup>26</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 7–10 January 1764.

<sup>28</sup> *Dublin News Letter*, 26–30 January 1741/2.

<sup>23</sup> *Pue's Occurrences*, 12–16 January 1773.

<sup>25</sup> *Dublin News Letter*, 26–30 January 1741/2.

<sup>27</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 24–6 May 1770.



world outside the community. Advertising for a wide range of products and services came into its own during the eighteenth century, advertisers taking advantage of this countrywide spread of newspapers. Irish newspapers made their way to England also, formally to coffee houses and taverns, and informally through the post to family and acquaintances. In this way Irish audiences in England could keep up to date with Irish concerns. While visiting Bath in 1790 Betsy Sheridan received copies of the Dublin newspapers. She wrote, ‘we saw in the *Dublin Evening Post* a most wonderful account of the performance of Jane Shore’.<sup>29</sup>

Books were promoted through literary periodicals and in specialist publications such as *The Literary Register, or an Account of Books Published Both Abroad and at Home*, which was advertised in 1747 for 2d.<sup>30</sup> Review journals, and literary magazines with sections devoted to book reviews, helped shape the tastes of literary readers. The earliest Irish review journals of international scope, the quarterly *A Literary Journal* (1745–9), and its successor *The Compendious Library* (1751–2), contained notices of new books published on the Continent, and included abstracts in English translation of some of the more important foreign language works.<sup>31</sup> Monthly periodicals, too, catered for a countrywide spread of readers with diverse tastes, for the relatively affordable cost of 6d. to 1s. per month. Widely available through the postal network from the 1740s, titles began to proliferate in the second half of the century, comprising English-published magazines, Irish reprints, and Irish originals. Topics covered prose, poetry, theatrical reviews, parliamentary speeches, extracts and reviews of new books, engraved music, prints, maps, and needlework patterns, and included a digest of births, marriages, deaths, and promotions of Irish interest.

## Readers’ Reactions to their Reading

Advertising allows us to recreate the target audience for certain books, to identify potential rather than real readers. Authors and publishers tended to address themselves to the ideal reader. Genuine reactions from real readers towards their reading are hard to come by, and where evidence is available it applies to an individual or group and cannot be representative of readers at

<sup>29</sup> William Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan’s Journal: Letters from Sheridan’s Sister* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 195.

<sup>30</sup> *Dublin Courant*, 28 February–3 March 1746/7.

<sup>31</sup> Jean-Paul Pittion, ‘“A Literary Journal” (Dublin, 1744–9): Reflections on the Role of French Culture in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *Hermathena*, 121 (Winter 1976), 129–41; Máire Kennedy, ‘Nations of the Mind: French Culture in Ireland and the International Booktrade’, in Michael O’Dea and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *Nations and Nationalisms, Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 335 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1995), 147–58.

the same social level or in the same circumstances. Caution is needed even where a reader gives his or her reactions to a text; in some instances a set response may be required. In an educational context, addressing a teacher or parent, the reader's response may be the approved one rather than a personal interpretation of the text.

Readers are identified from their stated reactions to their own reading, and from physical traces to be found in books. The main sources for individual commentaries are letters, diaries, journals, and other autobiographical writings. Books yield up names of owners, and sometimes annotations, underscoring of texts, or longer comments on blank pages or endpapers. These documents contain evidence for reading not easily found in other sources. In the early 1740s Nicholas Peacock, a prosperous farmer in County Limerick and still a bachelor, notes in his journal days spent alone reading amidst the bustle of farming life; he spent about one day a month in what was at this stage of his life a solitary pursuit.<sup>32</sup> Mrs Delany describes a pleasant domestic scene in Dublin in 1745: 'Mr Green is an agreeable man to have in the house, as he is very well bred and easy, conversable, and reads to us while we work in the evenings, so that we spend our time very pleasantly'.<sup>33</sup> Jonah Barrington recalls that as a young man, despite leading a rather wild life, 'I had a pretty good assortment of books of my own, and seldom passed a day without devoting some part of it to reading or letter-writing'.<sup>34</sup> In the 1780s Dorothea Herbert tells of communal reading during a period of quiet in her active social life in County Tipperary: 'Mr Matthews read plays to us and sang songs till one or two o'clock after supper' and 'we now sat down quietly in the domestic way, with no other company than Mr Gwynn. . . . We read poetry, novels, sermons, history, hickledy pickledy as they came in our way without any other system except a smattering of English and French grammar'.<sup>35</sup> Betsy Sheridan's reading took place both in company and alone. In 1788 she recounts that her brother Richard's wife 'after tea got a book, which she read to us till supper. This I find is the general way of passing the evening.' The following year she describes an unsatisfactory reading experience: 'I staid at home and alone, endeavoured to continue Zeluco, but when the spirits are oppress'd reading is not always the best resource'.<sup>36</sup>

Readers sometimes tell where and how their reading has taken place. On winter evenings Elizabeth Shackleton used to bring some of the scholars from her husband's boarding school into her parlour to read religious works

<sup>32</sup> NLI, MS16091, Journal of Nicholas Peacock 1740–51.

<sup>33</sup> Mary Delany, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, ed. Rt. Hon. Lady Llanover, 1st ser., 3 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1861), ii. 340.

<sup>34</sup> Jonah Barrington, *Personal Sketches of his Own Times*, 2 vols. (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1869), i. 37.

<sup>35</sup> Herbert, *Retrospections*, i. 103, 115.

<sup>36</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 118, 164.

and history to her while she worked.<sup>37</sup> On their arrival in Litchfield in 1788 Betsy Sheridan ‘walk’d out and bought my father some magazines which he is now reading by a good fire.’<sup>38</sup> Joseph Cooper Walker, on a visit to England in 1789, brought appropriate books with him for the journey: ‘I made my excursion to Buxton a classical one. In the Isle of Anglesea I read, as I approached Snowdon, Mason’s *Caractacus*, recited Gray’s *Bard* on a rock over Conway’s “foaming flood”, visited the raven-inn in Shrewsbury and enquired about the clock to which Falstaff alluded’.<sup>39</sup> Richard Lovell Edgeworth ‘pursued his way to Longford with Turner on crimes and punishments in the chaise with him’ in 1794.<sup>40</sup> In 1784 a melancholy event was reported from Waterford in Finn’s *Leinster Journal*, the death of ‘Mrs Eleanor Sheaffly (a maiden lady) [who] was reading, the candle set fire to her handkerchief, and instantly communicated to the rest of her cloaths.’<sup>41</sup>

Reading with ‘elegance and propriety’ was regarded as a polite accomplishment for young persons by at least mid-century. The vogue for reading aloud was streamlined to ensure that the experience was enjoyable for the audience and an opportunity for the reader to display his/her skills. Directions for reading were published for the benefit of young persons to enable them to distinguish themselves in company. The following advice was issued to a young lady in 1740: ‘To read well is the first and greatest article in a young lady’s education . . . there is a certain beauty and harmony of voice requir’d in reading that without a nice attention and frequent application is not to be obtain’d’.<sup>42</sup> Another set of guidelines, published in Dublin in 1779, advised, ‘Let the tone of your voice be the same in reading as in speaking. Never read in a hurry. . . . Suit your voice to the subject. Be attentive to those who read well, and remember to imitate their pronunciation. Read often before good judges, and thank them for correcting you.’<sup>43</sup>

Certain denominations encouraged reading as part of the spiritual life, regarding it as a necessary discipline in a person’s moral development. The Bible and the New Testament were primary texts, supplemented by the pious writings of co-religionists, and, depending on the sect, sermons, catechisms, lives of the saints, guides to leading a better life, moral maxims, and instruction for children. In the religious sphere texts were not only read in private and in groups, but discussed and recommended. Thus letters and diaries of members of religious groups offer some evidence of readers’ reactions to

<sup>37</sup> Mary Leadbetter, *Memoirs and Letters of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton, late of Ballitore, Ireland* (London: Charles Gilpin, 1849), 24.

<sup>38</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan’s Journal*, 103.

<sup>39</sup> Dublin City Libraries, Gilbert Library MS146, Joseph Cooper Walker, Letters addressed to William Hayley 1786–1812, letter 6, 26 December 1789.

<sup>40</sup> F. V. Barry, *Maria Edgeworth: Chosen Letters* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931), 68.

<sup>41</sup> Finn’s *Leinster Journal*, 4–8 December 1784.

<sup>42</sup> Wetenhall Wilkes, *A Letter of Genteel and Moral Advice to a Young Lady* (Dublin, 1740, ESTC T86936), 97.

<sup>43</sup> *A Museum for Young Gentlemen and Ladies* (Dublin, 1779, ESTC N60877), 6.

these texts. Notes were often taken and suitable phrases transcribed; in some cases commonplace books were kept by readers to keep a record of their reading. In this way intensive reading practices continued in the religious area during the eighteenth century when they had virtually disappeared in other genres of reading. John Wesley instructed his followers to read for 'at least five hours in four and twenty', the recommended texts being the Scriptures, 'the Christian Library, and other books which we have published in prose and verse'.<sup>44</sup> A member of the Society of Friends, Richard Shackleton of Ballitore, wrote to Samuel Elly in 1771: 'I am glad to hear from his mother, that S- behaves agreeably, I hope he will continue to do so, to love home, love retirement, read, at his leisure from necessary business, the Holy Scriptures, and the historical accounts of the lives, conflicts, travellings, jeopardies, sufferings, and latter ends of our ancient worthies.'<sup>45</sup>

Young men and women had their reading closely monitored, and moral judges abounded. In 1740 young ladies were advised, 'novels, plays, romances and poems must be read sparingly and with caution; lest such parts of them, as are not strictly tied down to sedateness, should inculcate such light, over-gay notions as might by unperceiv'd degrees soften and mislead the understanding'.<sup>46</sup> Bishop Edward Synge, guiding his daughter, Alicia, in 1750 wrote, 'your general reading ought to be books of instruction, in virtue, politeness, or something that may improve your mind, or behaviour. With them you may mix all books of innocent entertainment. In this description I do not include romances'.<sup>47</sup> Mary Shackleton sent a parcel of books to Margaret Pike in 1783, which contained a copy of 'Perceval's Tales for my sweet Betsy Pike—I have not time to read them, but I hope they are not improper for her—see whether they are.'<sup>48</sup> Margaret Pike quickly dispatched the unsuitable reading matter found among her brother William's books in 1784:

Joseph and I have just finished a job of book burning . . . 'twas Lucretius it was directed against. . . . [I] thought it best in the first place to sacrifice this to the flames, my mother heartily approved it, and so I believe would William if he were here . . . but fearing lest delays might be dangerous, we thought it best not to wait his return.<sup>49</sup>

Yet, in some instances a reading underground must have existed among young people, when less approved books were discovered and consumed.

<sup>44</sup> Dudley Levistone Cooney, *The Methodists in Ireland: A Short History* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2001), 147, Q29 from the *Large Minutes*. <sup>45</sup> Leadbetter, *Memoirs of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton*, 66.

<sup>46</sup> Wilkes, *Advice to a Young Lady*, 105.

<sup>47</sup> Marie-Louise Legg (ed.), *The Synge Letters: Bishop Edward Synge to his Daughter Alicia, Roscommon to Dublin 1746–1752* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1996), 210.

<sup>48</sup> NLI, MS 5987, A Collection of Autograph Letters from Margaret Christy, afterwards Pike, to Mary Shackleton, afterwards Leadbetter, 1779–1784, f. 41.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 87.

Sheridan's *The Rivals* suggests just such a scenario, where the forbidden reading is smuggled in from the circulating library.<sup>50</sup>

Rousseau was one of the most celebrated writers of the second half of the eighteenth century. Known to many only by reputation, readers came to his works with certain expectations and preconceived ideas, and his works divided his audience. Lady Emily Fitzgerald, Duchess of Leinster, and her sister Lady Caroline Fox, read *Émile* in 1762, shortly after its publication. Lady Caroline wrote, 'I hope you like it. I am delighted with it and yet wonder how a book setting out upon a principle I think false, viz., the possibility of happiness in this world, so full of absurdities and paradoxes, can please me so much'; however, later she was to change her opinion, considering his works 'destructive of all principles hitherto held sacred both moral and religious'.<sup>51</sup> Mrs Delany considered his works dangerous 'to young and unstable minds... as under the guise and pomp of virtue he does advance very erroneous and unorthodox sentiments'.<sup>52</sup> However, a more mature Lady Louisa Stuart had less to fear. Writing to her sister Lady Caroline Dawson in present-day County Laois in 1778, she describes a reading of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*

with which I am charmed, perhaps more than I should be, yet I do not think I feel the worse for it... indeed I believe it might be very dangerous to people whose passions resemble those he describes... I do think it, notwithstanding several absurdities, the most interesting book I ever read in my life.<sup>53</sup>

Dr William Drennan of Belfast recommended the *Confessions* to his sister Martha McTier in 1784: 'I have been reading a most singular and entertaining book called the Confessions of Rousseau, which none but men or very learned ladies ought to read.' The following year he informed her that his friend Revd Dr William Bruce 'tells me he admires Rousseau much more than I do, and thinks it the most curious and interesting book he has met with'. In reply Martha wrote with some surprise 'so Bruce likes Rousseau—if it's Eloisa you mean I wonder at it'.<sup>54</sup> Betsy Sheridan began the last volume of *Confessions* at Bath in 1790 'which Harry is delighted with and has now made over to me', but her reactions have not been recorded.<sup>55</sup>

Happy memories of childhood reading are frequently expressed by readers. Locke, in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, recommends 'some easy pleasant book suited to his capacity' for the child reader 'wherein the

<sup>50</sup> Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals* (Dublin, 1775, ESTC T59194), I. ii.

<sup>51</sup> Brian Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster*, 3 vols. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1949–57), i. 353, 522.

<sup>52</sup> Delany, *Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, 2nd ser. (1862), i. 76.

<sup>53</sup> Mrs Godfrey Clark (ed.), *Gleanings from an Old Portfolio* (Edinburgh: privately printed, 1895), 50–1.

<sup>54</sup> Jean Agnew (ed.), *The Drennan–McTier Letters I, 1776–1793* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1998), 184, 203, 204.

<sup>55</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 193.

entertainment that he finds might draw him on, and reward his pains in reading, and yet not such as should fill his head with perfectly useless trumpery, or lay the principles of vice and folly'.<sup>56</sup> He chooses Aesop's *Fables* and *Reynard the Fox* as most suitable, recommending especially books with pictures. Jonah Barrington, recalling his early reading in the ramshackle library of his grandfather, read 'such of them as I could comprehend or found amusing; and looked over all the prints in them a hundred times.' From this early delight he felt 'confident of the utility of embellishments in books intended for the instruction or amusement of children.' Outlining his chosen books he records that '*Gulliver's Travels*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Fairy Tales*, and *The History of the Bible*' were his favourites. 'I believed every word except the fairies, and was not entirely sceptical as to those good people'. His early education was 'a regular course by horn-book, primer, spelling-book, reading-made-easy, Aesop's Fables etc.; but I soon aspir'd to such of the old library books as had pictures in them.'<sup>57</sup>

Dorothea Herbert describes her early reading when her brothers returned from school: 'we were all book mad—Dido and Aeneas, Hector and Paris fired our brains, a sixpenny voyage of Lord Anson, and old Robinson Crusoe's tale completed our mania'. Their games centred around the stories: 'one time we fancied ourselves thrown on a desert island till a fight who should be Crusoe and who Fryday ended our play. Another time we were a set of sailors thrown on the delightful island of Juan Fernandez.'<sup>58</sup> Maria Edgeworth tells of the delight of the younger children when her father brought home a volume of fairy tales:

he has related, with various embellishments suited to the occasion, the story of Fortunatus, to the great delight of young and old, especially of Sneyd, whose eyes and cheeks expressed strong approbation, and who repeated it afterwards in a style of dramatic oratory!<sup>59</sup>

William Carleton recalls that as a boy he found an odd volume of *Tom Jones* in the house of a school friend:

I have not the slightest intention of describing the wonder and the feeling with which I read it. No pen could do justice to that. It was the second volume; of course the story was incomplete, and, as a natural consequence, I felt something amounting to agony at the disappointment—not knowing what the *dénouement* was.<sup>60</sup>

Readers sometimes showed a great familiarity with certain texts, citing them repeatedly, and sometimes slightly misquoting, indicating that they may have been quoting from memory and not transcribing from the printed

<sup>56</sup> John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (Dublin, 1738, ESTC T155628), 165.

<sup>57</sup> Barrington, *Personal Sketches*, i. 2, 32.

<sup>59</sup> Barry, *Chosen Letters*, 60.

<sup>58</sup> Herbert, *Retrospections*, i. 16.

<sup>60</sup> Carleton, *Autobiography*, i. 74.

page. A note of caution, however, needs to be introduced. Then, as now, many can quote from Shakespeare or Voltaire's *Candide*, or other well-known books, without ever having read them. Lady Caroline Fox and Betsy Sheridan both read and admired the works of Madame de Sévigné and quoted her often. Lady Caroline, in her letters to her sister Lady Emily, writes, 'What lovely weather we have! nothing is so pleasant as *ces beaux jours de crystal de l'automne* (as Madame Sevigné calls them), both for riding and walking'. This quotation she used on a number of occasions, substituting 'octobre' for 'automne'. Another favourite was 'as Madame Sevigné observes, *le temps s'en va et nous emporte avec lui si terriblement vite*'. In 1767 she admits, 'I love you for calling her "dear" Madame de Sévigné. I'm quite glad to think I shall have forgot her letters enough to read them over again'.<sup>61</sup> Betsy, writing to her sister in 1788 says, 'I might have spared you some of my last journal, but, as our friend Mad: de Sevigné says, that is one of the plagues of absence that we are often concern'd at greifs that no longer exist'.<sup>62</sup>

Likewise, some invoke fictional characters to describe or illustrate an acquaintance. Characters displaying villainous traits can act as a useful shorthand among readers when describing contemporaries. Martha McTier writes to her brother William Drennan in 1776, 'Our Lamela [servant in *Gil Blas*] got drunk the day we had the Halidays'.<sup>63</sup> Betsy Sheridan writes in 1789, 'his sending a duplicate of his string of falsehoods to my brother was an action worthy of Blifil' (in Fielding's *Tom Jones*).<sup>64</sup> Admired characters, too, could be used in this way. Dorothea Herbert sees her cousin, Sir John Blunden, as 'quite the Sir Charles Grandison of his family' in 1784,<sup>65</sup> whereas Betsy Sheridan compares herself to *Gil Blas* in 1789: 'I could not help thinking while I was supping with princes and great people that my situation was a little like poor *Gil Blas* at the court of Madrid'.<sup>66</sup> In describing Lady Dartree Betsy notes, 'she gives me the idea of those characters that Richardson has some times drawn but that few people believe really to exist'.<sup>67</sup> While in Brussels in 1802, Maria Edgeworth describes the Flemish horses pulling their coach, 'their hoofs all shaggy, their manes all uncombed, and their tails long enough to please Sir Charles Grandison himself', and the post houses on the road to Bruges, 'one into which I peeped, a *grenier*, like that described by Smollett, in which the murdered body is concealed'. The female servant at another posting stop fills them with horror: 'do you remember the woman in *Caleb Williams*, when he wakens and sees her standing over him with an uplifted hatchet? our *servante* might have stood for this picture'.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Fitzgerald, *Correspondence*, i. 183, 255, 261, 415, 473, 491.

<sup>62</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 128.

<sup>63</sup> Agnew (ed.), *Drennan-McTier Letters*, i. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 173.

<sup>65</sup> Herbert, *Retrospections*, i. 104.

<sup>66</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 169.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>68</sup> Barry, *Chosen Letters*, 96–9.

Serious readers kept commonplace books to record significant passages from their reading for personal reference. This pursuit had a long tradition among scholars, going back to the philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome and the monks in the early medieval church. During the eighteenth century, when less intensive reading practices prevailed, when reading spread down the social scale, and when more books were read for their entertainment value, this discipline declined. It did not disappear, however, and the practice was continued by clergymen, lawyers, doctors, poets, philosophers, and historians. As late as 1778 blank commonplace books, with printed introductions and advice for the arrangement and indexing of entries, were produced in Dublin in portable pocket size and in larger folio size.<sup>69</sup> One such pocket volume was the property of Edward O'Reilly, compiler of the *Irish-English Dictionary* (1817).<sup>70</sup> In it he recorded literary quotations from Pope, Milton, and Shakespeare, and historical extracts from the Irish *Annals*, *Patent Rolls of James I*, and Lanigan's *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland* (1822). The latest dated entry is from 3 June 1828, indicating the use of such documents into the nineteenth century.

Readers engaged with the texts they read, bringing their own life experiences and interests to the interpretation of the text. Betsy Sheridan displayed a discernment in her reading of Lavater's *Physiognomy* in 1786:

I have been reading Lavater and intend becoming wise in my judgements on the cut of people's faces. . . . I can not say I am a convert to his opinions but his book is pleasingly written, and so I proceed with the same sort of pleasure one has in conversing with a sensible person tho' one may happen to have a different opinion.<sup>71</sup>

Maria Edgeworth, too, showed judgement in her reading; writing to her cousin, Sophy Ruxton, in 1798, she says of Robison's *Proofs of a Conspiracy*, 'the book is tiresome, and no sufficient proofs given of the facts, but parts of it will probably interest you'.<sup>72</sup> For an understanding of contemporary Italian life Joseph Cooper Walker recommended to William Hayley,

Mad. du Boccage and Mrs Piozzi are the most satisfactory. De la Lande's excellent and useful work is, I presume in your collection. If you have not read *Essai sur la vie de J.J. Barthelemy* par Louis J.B. Nivernais, permit me to recommend it to you. It is a little stream of the purest and most pathetic eloquence.<sup>73</sup>

He was clearly impressed with de Nivernais' work as he also recommended it to Lord Charlemont.<sup>74</sup> Occasionally a reader felt strongly enough to address

<sup>69</sup> *The Common-Place Book, for the Pocket: Formed Generally upon the Principles Recommended and Practised by Mr Locke* (Dublin, 1778, ESTC T231011).

<sup>70</sup> Dublin City Libraries, Dublin Collection 941.5.

<sup>71</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 98.

<sup>72</sup> Barry, *Chosen Letters*, 82.

<sup>73</sup> Dublin City Libraries, MS 146, Walker, Letters, letter 20, 30 June 1796.

<sup>74</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont*, ii (1784–1799), 13th report, appendix pt. viii (London: HMSO, 1894), 274.



him/herself to an author with whom they were not acquainted. Elizabeth Shackleton considered it her duty in 1770 to write to David Hume on the subject of his treatment of the Quakers in his writings, ‘which, I think, thou hast not represented in a true light, both in thy much-admired History of England, and in thy Essay on superstition and enthusiasm’. She advised him to read Robert Barclay’s *Apology for the True Christian Divinity* so that ‘being better informed concerning their tenets, that thou will speedily publish the truth respecting them.’<sup>75</sup>

Joseph Cooper Walker, referred to earlier in connection with his reading habits, was a clerk in the Treasury Office in Dublin Castle, antiquarian, and Italian scholar. He wrote a series of letters to William Hayley, the English poet, which exemplifies the mindset of the literary reader. The letters began in 1786 when the correspondents were not acquainted, and continues until Walker’s death in 1812.<sup>76</sup> Walker kept a journal of his travels in 1782 in which he linked his reading with the sights and events of his journey.<sup>77</sup> Walker and Hayley shared an interest in Italian literature and both published on the subject. Both were au fait with literary trends, read widely in the areas of modern and older literature, and could read Latin, Italian, and French. Both encouraged other authors, recommending them to publishers, reading their works in manuscript, and acquiring their newly published books. In the surviving letters, nearly one hundred, all written by Walker, he discusses up to 250 different titles, coming back to many again and again. He recommends authors and titles, passes on recommendations from others, refers to lending and borrowing of books, and tries to persuade Hayley to write on certain subjects. Milton’s works were of primary interest. Hayley was occupied in writing his life of Milton, and Walker was concerned with Milton’s Italian literary influences. After Walker’s death his personal library was auctioned, the catalogue revealing the scope and breadth of his literary interests: 1,400 lots in English, Italian, French, and Latin were offered to the public.<sup>78</sup>

Authors’ reactions to the works of other authors, and the reactions of an author’s selected audience have survived in some cases in manuscript or printed form. An author gauged his/her audience through the responses of a few individuals. In this way readers made a profound contribution to an author’s future works. Thomas Leland sent a copy of his *History of Ireland* (1773) to Richard Shackleton in Ballitore. Leland wrote, ‘the book has been read in England, and received with more favour than I hoped for. Here it has

<sup>75</sup> Leadbetter, *Memoirs of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton*, 52–3.

<sup>76</sup> Dublin City Libraries, MS 146, Walker, Letters.

<sup>77</sup> NLI, MS 2654, Joseph Cooper Walker’s Itinerary 1782.

<sup>78</sup> *Bibliotheca St Valerensis. A Catalogue of Books, Manuscripts, Coins, Paintings, Antiquities, Being the Collection of the Late Joseph Cooper Walker Esq., of St Valeri, near Bray, MRIA* (Dublin: R. E. Mercier, 30 June 1817).

had a few attentive readers'. Shackleton read the history 'with the best attention which I was capable of'; on the whole his reaction was favourable, but with some misgivings on the treatment of Quakers in the narrative. Dr Leland showed his willingness to take Shackleton's point into consideration: 'Had I received your favour before the octavo edition was printed off, the expression should not have continued in it. I must take the first opportunity in my power of correcting it.'<sup>79</sup> Shackleton offers gracious words on one of Edmund Burke's writings, in a letter to Burke's son, Richard, in 1785: 'I have read it myself, and am reading it to my wife; I am entertained, informed and instructed by it. I am always glad when Edmund writes, because he then speaks not only to the present age of the world, but to future ages'. He goes on: 'it is hard for me to say what the general sentiment of people, who read and think in this country is, respecting the book, but I believe it is mostly approved of by such'.<sup>80</sup> Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, antiquary and Catholic landowner in County Roscommon, writing to the Chevalier O'Gorman in 1781, was careful in his assessment of Charles Vallancey's *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*:

Worthy Colonel Vallancey was kind enough last week to enclose in packets his last *Collectanea* for my perusal. I evidently see therein the hand of the late Dr O'Brien, who indulged too much to fancy in his researches both philological and historical. I found some capital mistakes in those *Collectanea*, as well as some good observations, but I thought it not polite to point out those mistakes to the Colonel except in one or two instances, which I trust gave him no offence.<sup>81</sup>

Thomas Sheridan's *Life of Swift*, published in 1784, was read by his two daughters, Alicia and Betsy. In a letter to Alicia, Betsy tells her 'I read my Father what you say of his life of Swift and he seem'd much pleased. As far as I have gone I agree with you but I have not been able to find time to get thro' it'.<sup>82</sup> Joseph Cooper Walker was very enthusiastic after reading of *The Orphan of the Castle* by Charlotte Smith in 1789: 'It is indeed, as you justly observe, a wonderful production. Allow me to impose on you the trouble of making my warmest thanks acceptable to the fair author for the pleasure I derived from the perusal of it. It is universally read and admired here.'<sup>83</sup> He was a supporter of Charlotte Brooke's work on Irish poetry from the start, pressing her to continue with the publication of *Reliques of Irish Poetry*. He employed her translations in the *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* in 1786, but she was

<sup>79</sup> Leadbetter, *Memoirs of Richard and Elizabeth Shackleton*, 89, 90, 91.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 175. Burke's work is not identified in the letter. The editor presumes it to be *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, but the letter is dated 1785 so it cannot be this work.

<sup>81</sup> Catherine Coogan Ward and Robert E. Ward (eds.), *The Letters of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, 1772-1790*, 2 vols. (published for the American Cultural Institute by University Microfilms International, 1980), ii. 162.

<sup>82</sup> Lefanu (ed.), *Betsy Sheridan's Journal*, 34-5.

<sup>83</sup> Dublin City Libraries, MS 146, Walker, Letters, letter 3, 2 April 1789.

too shy to put her name to them. In a letter to William Hayley he writes of ‘our ingenious friend Miss Brooke . . . I hope her Reliques meet your approbation? Would you recommend it to her to proceed? She has now some precious originals in her possession which I have been encouraging her to translate.’<sup>84</sup> After the publication of Hayley’s *Life of Milton* in 1796, Walker solicited the opinion of Lord Charlemont, whom he considered ‘one of the best scholars and most elegant writers in this kingdom . . . a man of refined taste, deeply skilled in Italian literature’. Charlemont thought it ‘one of the most capital pieces of biography in our language’.<sup>85</sup> Walker praised Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* when it was published in 1800: ‘an Irish production entitled *Castle Rackrent* has lately appeared in London. The pictures of life in this little work are allowed to be equal to any thing that has appeared since the days of Smollett’.<sup>86</sup> While in London in 1802 Richard Lovell and Maria Edgeworth visited a circulating library to gauge the popularity of her books: ‘My father asked for *Belinda*, *Bulls*, etc., found they were in good repute—*Castle Rackrent* is better—the others often borrowed, but *Castle Rackrent* often bought’.<sup>87</sup>

## Conclusion

Research carried out on the eighteenth-century book trade in Ireland has outlined the nature and extent of the trade, its production methods, and its distribution channels. It is clear that books and other printed materials were available to those who could afford to purchase them or could manage to borrow them, and who were capable of reading them, or could listen to them being read. By the eighteenth century many potential readers whose education and circumstances meant that they had the capability and opportunity to read existed. Advertising, geared towards the book purchaser and periodical subscriber, reached both the urban and rural public thanks to the penetration of the newspaper press, especially in the second half of the century. Readers in the remotest areas could become aware of the latest publications issued by Dublin and provincial booksellers, and orders could be placed through the local newspaper office or agent. Borrowing and lending of reading matter occurred between friends and family. Less-well-off members of society were sometimes in receipt of the benevolence of the charitable when religious and moral works were distributed among them.

<sup>84</sup> Dublin City Libraries, MS 146, Walker, Letters, letter 6, 26 December 1789.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, letter 21, 14 July 1796.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, letter 48, 23 November 1800.

<sup>87</sup> Barry, *Chosen Letters*, 92.

The majority of past readers have left few, if any, traces of their reading. All we have to go on are a small number of accounts, often not primarily concerned with the activity of reading, where the experience of reading is peripheral to the events being narrated. Sometimes texts were mediated by others, clergy, teachers, or parents. In addition, evidence is most forthcoming from the well-to-do and highly literate elements of society; however, we only get glimpses of how texts were received further down the social scale. We often find a well-observed description of a reading activity, which does not record individual responses. The difficulty is in recovering the individual's response to texts—and in seeking to discover what meanings the readers, or audience, took from the text. For this we depend on very subjective sources, from which we are not in a position to generalize the experience. By looking at the various ways in which books were read, how they were read, the physical places in which they were read, some common factors begin to emerge.

We can document reading and listening as a social activity among groups at different levels of society. At gentry and middling level this was usually an activity where all could participate, the role of reader and auditor could rotate, and any member of the group was capable of performing the task of reader. In mixed literate and non-literate company, although all could participate as an audience, only the skilled members were capable of doing the reading. Personal accounts show that evenings spent reading in company were common and were usually considered a pleasant way to pass the time. Contemporary accounts indicate that guests were frequently prevailed upon to read, no doubt to bring variety to the family's evening entertainment. Good readers were appreciated and sought after and the skill of reading aloud was an important social accomplishment. Solitary reading also took place, especially in more elevated circles where people had the opportunity to spend time reading and where space was available to read without interruption. Reading was frequently combined with work, allowing it to be a useful, and not a lazy, pastime. Women, especially, could work at sewing while being read to. Among many religious denominations there was a perceived link between reading and moral improvement.

Because of the diversity of reading matter and the range of experiences brought to the reading of a text it is impossible to place the reader within a rigid framework, but some broad conclusions can be drawn. Readers used books, periodicals, and pamphlets to learn about a subject, sometimes in a pedagogical situation or for personal improvement; to learn a language; to gather information on a foreign country; to learn about a period of history; to study the lives of famous persons; to learn, or improve upon, a skill. Readers wished to understand political situations by reading pamphlets and newspapers. Readers contributed to their spiritual life by reading the Bible, with accounts of pious lives and moral tales. Readers read texts and treatises

to further their careers in commerce, administration, law, education, medicine, the military, agriculture, and estate management. Readers read to amuse themselves and entertain others. Thus we have hundreds of instances of the experience of reading among individual readers or listeners. All of these contribute to our understanding of the ways in which texts circulated, and of the reader's central role in the communications process.

## IV

# THE IMPACT OF PRINT

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# Religious Change, 1550–1800<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas O'Connor*

The press was an integral part of the religious revival that swept through early modern Ireland but the different doctrinal, political, and pastoral priorities that separated the reforming agencies, Catholic and Protestant, ensured that the book functioned in confessionally distinctive ways. For reforming Catholics, the encounter with God took place primarily through the sacraments, administered, in Latin, by a trained priest.<sup>2</sup> Here the potential of the press lay in modernizing the inherited devotional system, largely by providing the clergy with catechetical and homeletical material and supplying the laity with works of piety. For reforming Protestants, on the other hand, God was encountered in the Scriptures, a fact that tied the success of their mission to the provision of the vernacular Bible and form of service. Thus, whereas for reforming Catholics the printed word functioned in a complex symbiosis with the sacraments, for reforming Protestants it was, itself, sacramental.

However, for large sections of society over much of the period under examination here, low literacy levels and poor access to schooling blunted the effect of the press, effectively limiting it to clergy and educated laity. To reach a wider audience, the printed word depended on motivated and disciplined preachers, not only to repeat, again and again, the message carried by the printed word but also to customize it for particular congregations and to ensure that listeners persevered. Catholic reformers had an advantage here as, for all their divisions, their programme centred on the native, generally bilingual, priest in the community who inherited whatever liturgical and socially reinforcing pageantry the medieval church had offered.<sup>3</sup> Libraries and printing presses operated as part of the seminary system that aspired to

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., kindly read earlier versions of this article and his comments prevented the commission of not a few errors. For any that remain the author assumes complete responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick J. Corish, *The Irish Catholic Experience* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1985), 105–6.

<sup>3</sup> Bernadette Cunningham, ‘“Zeal for God and for Souls”: Counter-Reformation Preaching in Early Seventeenth-Century Ireland’, in Alan J. Fletcher and Raymond Gillespie (eds.), *Irish Preaching 700–1700* (Dublin: Four Courts Press 2001), 108–26.



produce obedient, orthodox clergy.<sup>4</sup> A seminary formation was, of course, no guarantee of a dutiful clergy. Nor were the Catholic laity, who controlled church resources, entirely passive receivers of reform programmes. However, once he gained the confidence of the local Catholic patron, the seminary priest was usually a powerful agent of religious reform and revival.<sup>5</sup>

In theory, the Protestant reform family, with its rejection of traditional liturgical practices and its emphasis on the Scriptures, appeared in a good position to benefit from the new print technology, but in practice it was as dependent on its preachers as its Catholic rival. On balance, however, it was less unsuccessful in producing them. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, those ministers recruited for the Protestant reform by conversion from the old church were too compromised by existing social and religious loyalties to be effective. In 1576 Sir Henry Sidney lamented that the wealthy diocese of Meath had only eighteen curates capable of speaking English, the rest he dismissed as ‘Irish rogues, having very little Latin and still less learning and civility’.<sup>6</sup> Many ministers who came over from England were doctrinally suspect or careerist or both and, in any case, did not speak Gaelic. Further, because of the alienation of Irish church temporalities, they were under-resourced. By the time a local seminary was founded in Dublin in 1592 at Trinity College, Dublin, a rival Catholic college network was already operating from continental Europe. The relative failure of the state church to produce an adequate supply of native preaching ministers explains why its reform programme, despite privileged access to print, was less successful in penetrating Gaelic culture than either its Irish Catholic or Scots Calvinist rivals.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, none of this was apparent when Humphrey Powell published *The Boke of Common Praier* in 1551. Powell’s was the first book printed in Ireland and in the mid-sixteenth century hopes were high for book learning as a means of reforming Ireland and civilizing even its most churlish inhabitants. Twenty years later hard-headed native Dubliners like James Stanihurst, the speaker of the Irish parliament, still hoped, on the passage of an act for establishing grammar schools, that ‘surely might one generation sippe a little of this liquor of education and so bee induced to long for more’.<sup>8</sup> Stanihurst’s

<sup>4</sup> John Brady, ‘Father Christopher Cusack and the Irish College of Douai, 1594–1624’, in Sylvester O’Brien (ed.), *Measgra Mhichil Ó Chléirigh* (Dublin: Assisi Press, 1944), 98–107; *Collegium Hibernorum de Urbe: An Early Manuscript Account of the Irish College, Rome 1628–1678* (Rome: Irish College, 2003), 97–8.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Lombard, *De Regno Hiberniae Sanctorum Insula Commentarius*, ed. Patrick Moran (Dublin, 1868), 128.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony Cogan, *Diocese of Meath, Ancient and Modern*, 3 vols. (Dublin, 1862–7), ii, 19.

<sup>7</sup> For Calvinist success in Gaelic-speaking Scotland, see Jane Dawson, ‘Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland’, in Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe 1540–1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 231–53.

<sup>8</sup> See Colm Lennon, ‘Education and Religious Identity in Early Modern Ireland’, *Paedagogica Historica*, supplementary series, 5 (1999), 57.

generation recognized the potential of the book as a tool of cultural and religious indoctrination but, despite parliamentary initiatives in 1537 and 1571 to establish a national network of schools, was not successful in providing print with the cultural and educational infrastructure necessary for its successful deployment. Moreover, the very convenience of importing books from England ensured that the native Dublin press did not prosper and that the reforming message it carried was largely confined to English-speaking Ireland. Sometimes even English imports were unreliable. Archbishop Brown of Dublin, on opening a package of books lent him by Lord Deputy St Leger, was dismayed to discover them 'poisoned to maintayne the Mass with Transubstantiacion and other naughtiness . . . clean contrarie the sincere meanings of the worde of God and the Kings most godlie proceedings'.<sup>9</sup>

In the very early years, print in Ireland was dependent on England in much the same way as early English print, an off-shore, undercapitalized monopoly, depended on the Continent. In Ireland this continued a pattern already established in the late medieval period.<sup>10</sup> In 1559, the Archbishop of York 'send unto the deans of Christchurch and St Patricks twoe large Bibles to be read in those churches for the instruction of those whoe pleased to hear them read'. It is somewhat harder to believe that in the same year 'it appeared by the accomptes of John Dale bookseller for the Stationers of London that within twoe yeares ther wer sould in Dublin 7,000 Bibles'.<sup>11</sup> Up to 1700 it remained cheaper to import religious literature than to produce it locally.<sup>12</sup> This applied to Catholic literature as well. In the early seventeenth century Catholic books were sufficiently plentiful to cause James Ussher, in a 1612 letter to Luke Challoner, to express concern over access to 'English popish books' in the library of Trinity College.<sup>13</sup> By the eighteenth century, when Catholic printers and booksellers operated with relative freedom in Dublin, foreign titles, both English and continental, continued to dominate the market but they were now printed at home.<sup>14</sup>

The influence of Ireland's relative geographical remoteness on the penetration and impact of print is undeniable but needs to be nuanced. Book

<sup>9</sup> M. Ronan, 'Booke out of Ireland in Latten', *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 50 (1925), 505.

<sup>10</sup> Colmán Ó Clabaigh, *The Franciscans in Ireland 1400–1534* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 135, 155–80.

<sup>11</sup> 'The Annals of Dudley Loftus', *Analecta Hibernica*, 10 (1941), 235–6.

<sup>12</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 2.

<sup>13</sup> Cited in Elizabethanne Boran, 'Reading Theology within the Community of Believers' in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1990), 50. See also Elizabethanne Boran, 'The Libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, 1595–1608', in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 75–115.

<sup>14</sup> Hugh Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest 1760–69', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 42 (2000), 86.

supply, after all, was only one part of the total experience of the printed word. Although imports dominated the Irish reading market, sixteenth-century Irish cultures had well-developed manuscript traditions, which continued to operate with printed and oral means of communication as partner and rival, well into the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> This suggests two things. First, that more reading was going on in early modern Ireland than the number of surviving printed works suggests. Second, that the copying and close reading that a manuscript tradition presupposed facilitated the in-depth assimilation of foreign texts into local cultures, adapting them, in the process, to indigenous needs. This was especially the case in Gaelic society, which had a highly developed oral culture coexisting with a vigorous manuscript tradition. Grafted onto the means of oral transmission, manuscripts acted as a bridge between the local community and the latest trends in international religious reform.<sup>16</sup> A good example of the phenomenon is Richard Creagh's 'Epitome officii hominis Christiani', a bilingual (English/Irish) catechism, produced in 1556. Creagh almost certainly used it in his school in Limerick and it circulated widely fifty years before the first printed Gaelic catechisms. Bishop David Rothe (1573–1650) mentions the work and John Lynch possessed a copy in 1672.<sup>17</sup> Florence Conry's catechism of 1593, prepared in Salamanca, functioned in a similar way. It was a translation of a Spanish original and was 'sent into Ireland' in 1598.<sup>18</sup> There, like many other manuscript devotional works, it was copied and appears to have circulated widely.<sup>19</sup> Printed texts sometimes worked in tandem with manuscript versions. A significant part of Rothe's *Analecta* existed in an English-language manuscript version in the 1610s, complementing, it would seem, a printed, Latin-language international version.<sup>20</sup> In the 1620s, refectory readings from Conry's manuscript *De poena* were popular with Franciscan students in St Anthony's, Louvain.<sup>21</sup> Nor was scribal publication an exclusively Catholic phenomenon. In Youghal, for instance, in the late 1660s, a member of the local independent congregation took down the sermons heard at service, probably to repeat

<sup>15</sup> John Brady and Patrick Corish, 'The Church under the Penal Code', in *A History of Irish Catholicism* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1971), iv, 77–8.

<sup>16</sup> This continued a pattern already established in late medieval Ireland. See Ó Clabaigh, *Franciscans*, 5, 139.

<sup>17</sup> Colm Lennon, *Richard Creagh, Archbishop of Armagh* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 45. The possible source for the text was *Summa Doctrinae Christianae in usum Christianae Pueritiae per Quaestiones Recens Conscripta et nunc Denuo Edit* (Louvain, 1556).

<sup>18</sup> His 'Don teccosc criosdhuid[h]e . . .' is preserved in a single manuscript copy. He explains in the dedication, 'agus an b[h]liadainsi daois in Tigerna do chruí se go hEirinn e, 1598'. See Thomas F. O'Rahilly (ed.), *Desiderius Otherwise called Sgáthán an Chrábhaih by Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 1975), p. xiii.

<sup>19</sup> RIA, MSS 23 L 19 and 23 D 3 and BL, Sloane MS 353 7. The author owes these references to Salvador Ryan.

<sup>20</sup> NLI, MS 643.

<sup>21</sup> Jansen to Saint-Cyran 24 June 1622 in Jean Orcibal, *Correspondance de Jansenius* (Louvain, 1947), 158–9.

them at home. Evidently, although the paucity of native religious printed material may be attributed, in part, to the country's relative isolation, low literacy rates, the cheapness of imports, and, in the case of Catholic literature, state prohibition of imports, nonetheless scribally published material functioned as an adjunct to the preached and the printed word, customizing new religious practices and tenets for the local culture.<sup>22</sup>

Religious reform initiatives in early modern Ireland depended on foreign sources. Whereas the Catholic family of reforms had a largely continental inspiration, the various strands of the Irish Protestant reform relied almost exclusively on English and Scottish precedents. There is evidence that the penetration of Protestant literature was significant. In the second half of the sixteenth century, the Roman authorities were sufficiently concerned about the problem to grant dispensations to missionary priests to read heretical books with a view to informing themselves and refuting error.<sup>23</sup> However, English, with very few exceptions, remained the preferred language of Protestant evangelization, government efforts to provide religious literature in Gaelic were feeble and sporadic. Traditional official hostility to Gaelic did not help matters.<sup>24</sup> In 1537, an Irish parliamentary act ordered parents to teach their children the English language, order, and condition.<sup>25</sup> Even more explicitly, in 1560, the act of Uniformity, preferred English and Latin for church use and did not countenance the use of Gaelic 'as well for difficultie to get it printed, as that few in the whole Realme can read the Irish letters.'<sup>26</sup> Significantly, the first Gaelic book of the religious reform appeared in Scotland. John Carswell's (Seon Carsuel) *Foirm na nUrrnuidheadh*, published in Edinburgh in 1567,<sup>27</sup> was a translation of John Knox's *Form of Prayers* (1556).<sup>28</sup> Clan Campbell support for Carswell ensured the success of his venture to evangelize the Western Highlands through the infiltration of the local Gaelic elite. Carswell translated Knox into classical, literary Gaelic but Robert Lekprivik, the printer, opted for Roman type, a practice that became the norm in Scotland. It may have been the arrival in Ireland of copies of Carswell's work, coinciding uncomfortably with the incursion of Somhairle Buí Mac Domhnaill in Antrim, which forced the Dublin administration to

<sup>22</sup> See Bernadette Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 201–25.

<sup>23</sup> Frederick M. Jones, 'Canonical Faculties on the Irish Mission in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1558–1603', *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 30 (1953), 152–71.

<sup>24</sup> Tony Crowley, *The Politics of Language in Ireland, 1366–1922* (London: Longmans, 2000), 12–53.

<sup>25</sup> Lennon, 'Education and Religious Identity', 61. See also Brendan Bradshaw, *The Irish Constitutional Revolution of the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 127.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Bolton, *The Statutes of Ireland* (Dublin, 1621, ESTC S112079), 273.

<sup>27</sup> Nicholas Williams, *IbPionta i Leabhar: na Protastúin agus Prós na Ghaeilge, 1567–1724* (Dublin: An Clócomhair, 1986), 13.

<sup>28</sup> Knox's work was published in Geneva in 1556, as a prayer book for English-speaking religious exiles resident there.

grasp the linguistic nettle.<sup>29</sup> At some time before 1567, Adam Loftus, Archbishop of Armagh, and Hugh Brady, Bishop of Meath, received a government grant of £66.13s 4d. for ‘the making of carecter to printe the New Testament in Irish’.<sup>30</sup> This project never got off the ground,<sup>31</sup> in sharp contrast to parallel efforts in Wales, where Elizabeth I consented by an act of 1563 to the translation into Welsh of the Bible and the *Book of Common Prayer*, which duly appeared four years later. It was not until 1571 that the first Gaelic catechism was published by Seán Ó Cearnaigh. He produced 200 copies of *Aibidil Gaoidheilge agus Caiticiosma* on his government-sponsored press.<sup>32</sup> It is difficult to form a picture of the book’s distribution in Ireland, but it does not appear to have been extensive. In 1587 Sir William Herbert did not appear to have a copy to hand when he ordered the translation into Irish of prayers for church services in Munster.<sup>33</sup>

In the 1590s, the Dublin administration assembled a team to translate the New Testament into Irish, consisting of Uilliam Ó Domhnaill, and Seán Ó Cearnaigh, Nicolás Bhailís, Fearganainm Ó Domhnailláin, and Maoilín Óg Mac Bruaidealha, and later on, Dónal Óg Ó hUiginn joined the project.<sup>34</sup> Five hundred copies of the *Tiomna Nvuad* were printed in 1602 by Uilliam Ó Cearnaigh<sup>35</sup> and Seon Francke<sup>36</sup> but distribution appears to have been slow and patchy. Nearly thirty years later, in 1628, there were still copies of the original print run available for presentation to native students in Trinity College,<sup>37</sup> and in 1657, the Dublin government authorized the purchase of eighty copies, from stocks in London.<sup>38</sup> Ó Domhnaill’s translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* was published by Sean Francke in 1608.<sup>39</sup> Information on its distribution and use is thin.

<sup>29</sup> See Williams, *I bPrionta*, 21.

<sup>30</sup> C. McNeill, ‘Fitzwilliam MSS at Milton’, *Analecta Hibernica*, 4 (1932), 299–300.

<sup>31</sup> Dermot McGuinne, *Irish Type Design: A History of Printing Type in the Irish Character* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992), 7.

<sup>32</sup> Williams, *I bPrionta*, 25. See also *Irish Book Lover*, 28 (1942), 113.

<sup>33</sup> *Cal. S.P. Ire. 1586–88*, 533; Williams, *I bPrionta*, 186.

<sup>34</sup> Most of this first generation of native Irish intellectuals conforming to the state religion was educated in Cambridge and Oxford. See J. Foster (ed.), *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1500–1714*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1891–2); J. Venn and J. A. Venn (eds.), *Alumni Cantabrigienses . . . part I from the Earliest Times to 1751*, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1922–7). After 1592 they frequented Dublin University. See Alan Ford, ‘Who went to Trinity? The Early Students of Dublin University’, in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter-Reformation* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 53–74.

<sup>35</sup> A nephew of Seán, he studied printing in England and on the Continent. He was printer to Trinity College for some time before 1597.

<sup>36</sup> He was probably apprenticed to Ó Cearnaigh. In 1604 he was appointed printer to the King.

<sup>37</sup> Williams, *I bPrionta*, 34.

<sup>38</sup> T. C. Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 179.

<sup>39</sup> *Leabhar na nVrnaightheadh gComhchoidechiond agus Mheinisdraldachda na Sacrameinteadh, Malle le Gnathaighbhíbh agvs le hOrdaighthibh oile, de réir Eagaise na Sagsan* (Dublin, 1608). *Cal. S.P. Ire.*, 1608–10, 357–8.

By the end of the first decade of the seventeenth century, the state church had a Gaelic translation of the New Testament and of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Legislation was in place from 1571 for the setting up of grammar schools; a local seminary existed from 1592 at Trinity College, Dublin, and the church had defined its doctrine in the Convocation of 1615. What it still lacked was a sufficient supply of bilingual-preaching ministers to accompany the printed word of Scripture into the ears and hearts of the illiterate. Native Protestant clergy like James Ussher were aware of this difficulty and made efforts to accommodate the state religious reform to local conditions.<sup>40</sup> There were some successes. In 1622 the diocese of Meath had twenty native incumbents, and Killaloe, in the same year, had seven incumbents who could read the service book in Irish.<sup>41</sup> These were not enough. Lack of resources, a sense of cultural superiority, and want of zeal dogged the early-seventeenth-century Church of Ireland mission to the Irish at a crucial moment when it could have pushed home its print advantage against its nascent, under-resourced Catholic rivals or its Scots Presbyterian challengers. Overall, one gets the impression that, having produced the translations and defined the doctrine, the administration rested on its oars in the misguided expectation that the printed word would do its magic unaided. Producing religious texts was a great labour, but the greater travail was creating and maintaining the conditions under which these texts could assist the process of conversion.

The completion of the Gaelic translation of the Bible took a further eighty years. In the early 1630s, the indefatigable William Bedell, Bishop of Kilmore, published *Aibgitir.í. Theaguisg Cheudtosugheadh an Chríostaidhe* on the Elizabethan Gaelic press in Dublin.<sup>42</sup> Then, with the lukewarm support of the 1634 Convocation, he organized the translation of the Old Testament, which was finished by about 1640 but war, his death, and general disinterest delayed publication for decades until Robert Boyle's personal interest excited a flutter of print activity in Gaelic in the 1680s.<sup>43</sup> It was then that Henry Jones, Bishop of Meath,<sup>44</sup> who fretted that Irish books from Douai were 'further corrupting the people',<sup>45</sup> supplied Boyle with Bedell's manuscript. He had it published in 1685 but public reaction was less than overwhelming.<sup>46</sup> Bishop Dopping of Meath's attempt to raise a subscription was a discouraging failure,

<sup>40</sup> For example, *A Discourse on the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and English* (Dublin, 1631, ESTC S118950). See Phil Kilroy, *Protestant Dissent and Controversy in Ireland 1660–1714* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1994), 4. On Ussher's pastoral strategy see Boran, 'Reading Theology within the Community of Believers', 39–59.

<sup>41</sup> Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland*, 176.

<sup>42</sup> After 1618, the Dublin press was owned by London Stationers. See ch. 4; Terence McCaughey, *Dr Bedell and Mr King: The Making of the Irish Bible* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 2002).

<sup>43</sup> *An teagasc Críostduighe as Cóir de Nuile Dhuine d'Foghluim, súil Cuirfighehear fa Láimh Easbuig é*. See R. E. W. Maddison, 'Robert Boyle and the Irish Bible', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 41 (1), (1958), 81–101.

<sup>44</sup> *A sermon of Antichrist* (Dublin, 1676, ESTC R37509), dedication [2].

<sup>45</sup> McGuinne, *Irish Type Design*, 22.

<sup>46</sup> Williams, *I bPrionta*, 83.

an indication of the low level of interest in the project among Protestant clergy and laity.

Luckily for Irish Protestantism, readers of the English Bible fared better. As literacy rates crept up throughout the seventeenth century, Bible reading became accessible to a larger proportion of the Protestant population and was especially encouraged in Calvinist communities in Ulster. Here reading took place in the strict, formal context of the local worshipping community. Orthodoxy of interpretation was, of course, difficult to ensure but a trained ministry, dislike of Anglicanism, fear of Catholicism, and social convention kept most readers on the straight and narrow. It was in these small, Bible-reading communities that a local commitment to the Protestant reform, which was not merely anti-Catholic and defensive, grew.<sup>47</sup> Confined mostly to new arrivals to the kingdom, it was a rare bloom. Converts from the Gaelic cultural sphere were few, a fact due as much to the lack of evangelizing zeal as to any innate attachment to Catholicism. As an eighteenth-century Anglican commentator complained, while the Catholics kept worship and the gospels locked up in a foreign tongue, the Protestants, who had a linguistic advantage, continued to squander it by using English rather than Gaelic.<sup>48</sup> He either was unaware of or chose to ignore the fact that the Rheims/Douai Bible had been available to Catholics since 1603.

Despite its difficulties in the seventeenth century, the state church retained, at least in theory, its official ambition to act as a national church. In this crucial sense, it dominated the cultural space in which print operated and, though it failed to realize the full evangelizing potential of the book, it was generally in a position to prevent other reforming agencies doing any better. Dissenters and Catholics, in particular, were hamstrung by official proscription and lack of patronage. Nevertheless, elements of the book-based, continental Catholic reform did take root in many parts of the country. As early as the 1530s, Franciscan and Dominican Observants voiced concern over the consequences for ecclesiastical authority of the royal supremacy but it took some time before these reservations developed into a commitment to Catholic reform.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, observant qualms about the consequences of the royal supremacy struck a chord with the conservative municipal elite in port cities like Waterford. They traced their constitutional pedigree to the twelfth-century papal grant, *Laudabiliter*, and remained attached to Rome. Although not averse to acquiring confiscated monastic property and initially tolerant of minor liturgical innovations, they flinched at forsaking Rome.

<sup>47</sup> Raymond Gillespie, *Devoted People: Belief and Religion in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 75.

<sup>48</sup> John Richardson cited in Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland*, 178.

<sup>49</sup> Ó Clabaigh, *Franciscans*, 78–9; Thomas S. Flynn, *The Irish Dominicans, 1536–1641* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993), 16–17.

Their mixed feelings about the Henrican reform may have nudged some of them, from the late 1540s, towards sending sons destined for religious ministry to the University of Louvain rather than to Oxford or Cambridge.<sup>50</sup> Whatever its motivation, this decision was a heavy blow to state reform as, perhaps uniquely in mid-sixteenth-century Ireland, the port towns possessed the cultural infrastructure necessary for the successful deployment of print as an instrument of religious change. As it turned out, it was in Louvain, under the guidance of masters like Micheal Baius (1513–89), that these scions of Ireland's economic elite discovered a version of reformed Catholicism that corresponded to their religious needs and political sensitivities better than the varieties of late medieval Irish Catholicism on the one hand or state Protestantism and its Calvinist rival on the other. The books they brought back with them to Ireland were probably less significant than the sermons they preached and the scribally published texts they authored and circulated among their entourage. Although it was only fifty years later, as confessional divisions hardened, that Irish Catholic reform produced its own books, it had already put down roots in these port communities and their surrounding cultural hinterland. Thus, when Henry Fitzsimon S.J. (1566–1643) directed his *A Catholike Confutation of M. Iohn Riders Clayme of Antiquitie* (Rouen, 1608) and *The Justification and Exposition of the Divine Sacrifice of the Mass* (Douai, 1611) at these English-speaking merchant communities he was confirming existing religious convictions.<sup>51</sup>

It is difficult to know how widely these works circulated in Ireland. If the sentiments expressed in them were welcome in Waterford, Limerick, and elsewhere, the internal evidence suggests, however, that Catholic print was still not quite at home in Ireland. In the dedication of *The Justification...*, Fitzsimon admitted that his travels 'remote from [his] nationals' had affected his written style and he apologized for printing errors, explaining that 'only foreigners have taken the pains' to put the work through the press.<sup>52</sup> Things improved rapidly thereafter and none of Fitzsimon's qualms afflicted Robert Rochford when he published *The Life of the Glorious Bishop S. Patricke...* in St Omer in 1625. Rochford assumed a wide readership and the evidence is that his work reached the target audience. In the year of publication, for instance, copies were carried on a ship from Calais bound for Waterford.<sup>53</sup> We have little evidence of how this text was read and assimilated in early-seventeenth-century Ireland but Geoffrey Keating knew of it in the

<sup>50</sup> Brendan Jennings, 'Irish Students in the University of Louvain', in Sylvester O'Brien (ed.), *Measgra i gCuimhne Mhichil Uí Chléirigh* (Dublin: Assisi Press, 1944), 74–97.

<sup>51</sup> See Edmond Hogan (ed.), *Words of Comfort to Persecuted Catholics Written in Exile Anno 1607 Illustrated from Contemporary Documents by Henry Fitzsimon* (Dublin, 1881).

<sup>52</sup> He also published *Britannomachia Ministrorum* (Douai, 1614).

<sup>53</sup> Gillespie, *Devoted People*, 69.



1630s and it appears that a copy was in the possession of rebels in Limerick in 1641.<sup>54</sup>

This modest English language print production was accompanied by a significant, specialized output of historical, hagiographical, and theological material in Latin. This was authored mostly by Irish Catholic clergy resident in Europe and intended, it would appear, for an international clerical readership. Christopher Hollywood (1559–1626) published *Defensio Decreti Tridentini et Sententiae Roberti Bellarminii* in Antwerp in 1604.<sup>55</sup> Thomas Messingham's *Officia Ss Patricii*... (Paris, 1620) was an attempt to provide texts for liturgies other than the Mass while David Rothe's *Brigida Thaumaturga* (Paris, 1620) was originally published as part of a fund raising campaign for the Irish college in Paris. His *Analecta Sacra et Miira*... (s.l., 1617–19) had an international readership in mind and its publication is evidence of the increasingly sophisticated use of print for Irish Catholic propaganda purposes.<sup>56</sup>

The state church's 1602 publication of the Gaelic New Testament, followed in 1608 by the appearance of a translation of most of the *Book of Common Prayer*, could not be ignored by Catholic reformers.<sup>57</sup> However, domestic conditions made the establishment of a Gaelic press in Ireland impossible. It fell, therefore, to the fledgling Irish colonies in Europe to organize a print response to the Protestant offensive. The Louvain Franciscans were already familiar with the products of the Protestant press and even deigned to use them.<sup>58</sup> However, Bonaventure O'Hussey feared that, with these printed resources, Irish Protestants 'were attempting to lure away the people who were so attached to the Roman faith'.<sup>59</sup> In 1611 the Irish Franciscans cut a Gaelic font and set up a printing press in Antwerp, which soon moved to Louvain.<sup>60</sup> It was in order to 'help the youth and others in Ireland against the false doctrines of other religions' that the Franciscan press produced a small number of catechetical and devotional texts. Their

<sup>54</sup> Gillespie, *Devoted People*, 69.

<sup>55</sup> Bishop Edward Stillingfleet had a copy of this. See James Corbo, 'Fr Christopher Holywood S.J., 1559–1626', *Studies*, 33 (1944), 543–9.

<sup>56</sup> An annotated copy of the work is found in Bishop Stillingfleet's collection in Marsh's Library, Dublin. It is available in multiple copies in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Its first part drew a response from Thomas Ryves (d. 1652), *Regiminis Anglicani in Hibernia Defensio Adversus Analecten* (London, 1624, ESTC S116305).

<sup>57</sup> Brendan Jennings (ed.), *Louvain Papers* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1968), 36–7.

<sup>58</sup> Williams, *I bPrionta*, 130–2.

<sup>59</sup> For circulation in Flanders see Jennings (ed.), *Louvain papers*, 38–9. For Ireland see Cathaldus Giblin, 'The Contribution of the Irish Franciscans on the Continent in the Seventeenth Century', in Micheal Maher (ed.), *Irish Spirituality* (Dublin: Veritas, 1981), 101–2.

<sup>60</sup> See McGuinne, *Irish Type Design*, 23; Bernadette Cunningham, 'The Culture and Ideology of Irish Franciscan Historians at Louvain, 1607–1650', in Ciaran Brady (ed.), *Ideology and the Historians*, *Historical Studies*, xvii (Dublin: Liliput Press, 1991), 24–7, and E. W. Lynam, *The Irish Character in Print* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1968), 293.

circulation appears to have been limited to the Gaelic-speaking community then resident in Flanders though there is evidence that they also circulated in manuscript form in Ireland.<sup>61</sup> One of the volumes in question, Florence Conry's *Sgáthán an Chabhraidh* (1616), was intended to 'enlighten with holy teaching those ignorant of foreign languages' but it is unclear how many copies circulated in Ireland.<sup>62</sup>

Only a small number of publications came off the Irish press, beginning with Bonaventure O'Hussey's *An Teagasg Criosdaidhe* (1611) and between 1619 and 1641 the press does not appear to have been used at all.<sup>63</sup> This compares badly with the religious print output of the more culturally compromised Church of Ireland. The meagre production was due, in part, to financial constraints, which exacerbated existing problems of composition, printing, and distribution. Low literacy rates in Irish were a factor and it seems that Irish speakers who learned to read tended to become literate in English only. Unlike Wales and Brittany, where indigenous religious print cultures existed from the seventeenth century, Ireland, and Scotland, failed to develop self-sustaining native reading publics.<sup>64</sup> This was due, in part at least, to the fact that local parish missions, a key element in the evolution of local print cultures in Brittany, came relatively late to Ireland.<sup>65</sup> Cultural snobbery was a further problem and we know that Louvain-based writers fretted that the conservative Gaelic literary elite would not accept texts printed in Roman type and colloquial Gaelic.<sup>66</sup> Further, the early-seventeenth-century Irish Catholic clergy, frequently divided by wrangles over scarce resources at home and abroad, continued to rely overwhelmingly on the preached word, ignoring what was still, for many of them, the hidden potential of print. The spoken word had the obvious advantage of offering direct access to a Gaelic-speaking audience. However, without print as partner the unaccompanied spoken word permitted a multitude of interpretations that were difficult to police and that, in contrast to Protestant practice, were not tested against the Scriptures. This facilitated the survival of folk practices and facilitated a selective acceptance of reformed Catholicism. Such circumstances

<sup>61</sup> Jennings (ed.), *Louvain Papers*, 32–3.

<sup>62</sup> Conry, *Desiderius*, 1.

<sup>63</sup> McGuinne, *Irish Type Design*, 35. The other three publications were *Suim Riaghlachas Proinsias* (n.d.); Florence Conry (Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire), *Sgáthán an Chabhraidh* (1616); and Aodh MacAingil, *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAithridhe* (1618).

<sup>64</sup> Niall Ó Ciosáin, 'Printed Popular Literature in Irish 1750–1850: Presence and Absence', in Mary Daly and David Dickson (eds.), *The Origins of Popular Literacy in Ireland: Language Change and Educational Development 1700–1920* (Dublin: Department of Modern History, Trinity College, Dublin, and Department of Irish History, University College, Dublin, 1990), 51–2.

<sup>65</sup> D. Keenan, *The Catholic Church in 19th-Century Ireland: A Sociological Study* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1983), 157; J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-famine Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1983), 60.

<sup>66</sup> See, for instance, Aodh MacAingil, *Scáthán Shacramuinte an hAithridhe*, 5; Flaithrí Ó Maolchonaire, *Sgáthán an Chabhraidh*, 1–2.

were not propitious for the print-dependent early-seventeenth-century Catholic reform and help explain why its more bookish versions, notably Jansenism, made poor headway among the Irish. It is worth noting, however, that the Irish Jesuits kept a broad range of books, including technical works on dials and astronomy, in their Kildare Hall library in Dublin during the late 1620s.<sup>67</sup>

Despite the cultural limits within which it operated in Catholic Ireland, print did occasionally realize some of its communicative potential but not always in the service of religious renewal, pure and simple. A *fronde* of secular priests, opposed to Archbishop Thomas Fleming of Dublin (1593–1666), used it to considerable effect in a pamphlet war in the late 1620s.<sup>68</sup> One of the ringleaders, Luke Rochford, was no stranger to the press, having published two tracts in the early 1620s, one an attempt to win a kinsman back from Protestantism, the other a moralizing tract.<sup>69</sup> The general context for the affair was Fleming's alleged shoddy treatment of seculars and favouritism towards the regulars,<sup>70</sup> but the immediate trigger, as so often in clerical squabbles, was a sermon, delivered by the Irish Franciscan provincial Thomas Strange in 1627. For Paul Harris (1573–1642?) an English priest associated with Rochford, the sermon reeked of heresy, prompting him to pen a letter of 'fraternal correction' to his regular confrere.<sup>71</sup> This sparked an *affaire des curés* that escalated into a disciplinary crisis in the Dublin archdiocese<sup>72</sup> with repercussions in Paris, where Harris's and Rochford's associates, including Thomas Messingham, Henry Mailer, and Peter Fitton, enlisted the support of the Sorbonne.<sup>73</sup> Several editions of *Censura Propositionum Quarundam cum ex Hibernia Delatarum* . . . were printed in Paris in February and March 1631, to Fleming's consternation. Paul Harris rapidly prepared an English translation, which was published at Douai in April 1631.<sup>74</sup> This signalled a new

<sup>67</sup> A few of these now survive in the collection of Trinity College, Dublin, where they were placed after the closure of Kildare Hall in 1629.

<sup>68</sup> John Brady, 'Archdeacon Luke Rochford and his Circle', *Reportorium Novum*, 3 (1962–3), 108–21. On pamphlets as a new genre of cheap print see Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

<sup>69</sup> *The Genealogy of Protestants* . . . (Paris, 1621) and *An Antidot for Laziness, or a Sermon Against the Capitall Vice of Sloth and Sundrie Evill Effectes Thereof* by L.R. (Dublin, 1624, ESTC S100922).

<sup>70</sup> One of the fullest descriptions is contained in Mark Rochford's account to Luke Wadding, written in 1631. See Brendan Jennings (ed.), *Wadding Papers* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1933), 503–7.

<sup>71</sup> Patrick Moran, *History of the Catholic Archbishops of Dublin since the Reformation* (Dublin, 1864), 376. In 1627 Harris wrote *A Briefe Confutation of Mr James Ussher*.

<sup>72</sup> It is clear that Ussher kept Laud well informed of the controversy. See William Prynne (ed.), *A Breviate of the Life of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, Extracted (for the Most Part) Verbatim out of his own Diary, and Other Writing Under his own Hand* (London, 1644, ESTC R19543, R187846).

<sup>73</sup> On this complex affair, especially its English dimension, see A. F. Allison, 'Richard Smith's Gallican Backers and Jesuit opponents', *Recusant History*, 18 (1987), 329–401; 19 (1989), 234–85; 20 (1990), 164–206.

<sup>74</sup> It was entitled *Censurs of Certain Propositions, Partly Brought out of Ireland, Partly Drawne out of Two English Bookes*.

round in the pamphlet war, this time led by the Louvain Franciscan, Francis Matthews (alias O'Mahony and Ursulanus), who criticized the Sorbonne in *Examen juridicum* . . .<sup>75</sup> In Dublin, meanwhile, Fleming excommunicated Harris and Patrick Caddell, another of Rochford's associates, both of whom resorted to the press.<sup>76</sup> There can be little doubt that the local civil authorities, encouraged after 1632 by Wentworth, facilitated the printing and the circulation of Harris's material.<sup>77</sup> Attempts to remove him were met with threats of civil action and further blasts from the press.<sup>78</sup> The affair, which rumbled on during the Confederate Wars, illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses of Catholic use of print at this time. On the plus side, it demonstrated the level of sophistication of native Catholic print culture in English and testified to the existence of a complex cultural and educational infrastructure. Also impressive was the evidence of Dublin's integration into a Catholic print network, spanning London, Douai, and Paris. On the negative side, it is unlikely that this print production would have occurred at all without the heat of the passions aroused, the mischievous support of the local civil authorities, and the connection with the parallel affair in England. Print was making an impact in Catholic Ireland but not always in the service of the strict Tridentine reform. Indeed, Irish Catholic communities in the 1640s still enjoyed the luxury of choice among different versions of the Catholic reform. Some of them, usually opponents of the papal nuncio GianBattista Rinuccini, were even in a position to exercise it.<sup>79</sup>

Print remained an underused resource in the following, disturbed decades though Catholic print culture enjoyed diversification and expansion with presses established in Waterford (1643), Kilkenny (1646), and Cork (1648). Although little of their production was religious in nature,<sup>80</sup> Thomas Bourke, the Waterford-based printer could speak, in 1645, 'of the incomparable good and benefit that doth redound to the commonwealth by the print, of which

<sup>75</sup> *Examen juridicum Censurae Facultatis Theologicae Parisiensis*. This book bears a false Frankfurt imprint, and was probably printed in Louvain. See Jennings (ed.), *Wadding Papers*, 609.

<sup>76</sup> Patrick Caddell, *To all the Most Illustrious Archbishops and Reverend Bishops of Ireland* . . . (Rouen, vere Dublin, 1632, ESTC S267); Paul Harris, *The Excommunication Published by the L. Archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Flemming, alias Barnwell, Friar of the order of S Francis* . . . (Dublin, 1632, ESTC S124775). A second edition appeared in the following year; *Apktomastie sive Edmundus Ursulanus, Propter Usurpatum Judicium de Tribunali Dejectus, et Propter Libellum Famosum in Judicium Vocatus* (1633, ESTC S116899); *Fratres Sobrii Estote I Pet. 5:8 or an Admonition to the Friars of this Kindgome of Ireland to Abandon Such Hereticall Doctrines as they Daylie Publish* (Dublin, 1634, ESTC S116531).

<sup>77</sup> In 1635 Thomas Dease, Bishop of Meath, was ordered to remove Harris from Dublin but pleaded inability to do so because of Harris's connections in the city. See Moran, *History of the Catholic Archbishops*, 378–9.

<sup>78</sup> *Exile Exiled* . . . (Dublin, 1635, ESTC S119022).

<sup>79</sup> See Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin, *Catholic Reformation in Ireland: The Mission of Rinuccini 1645–1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 247.

<sup>80</sup> Jane H. Ohlmeyer, 'Introduction: For God, King or Country?', in eadem (ed.), *Political Thought in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 30.

the Catholics of this kingdom were deprived since the revolte from the true religion'.<sup>81</sup> His hoped-for religious print revival never materialized. The Catholic press was dismantled by Cromwell in the 1650s and the cultural conditions, which had permitted the beginning of the Catholic reform in the ports, the Dublin pamphlet war, and the Confederate press, disappeared. Something did survive, in reduced circumstances, abroad. A raft of polemical tracts appeared on the Continent, apportioning blame for the fiasco of the late 1640s and adopting a polemical tone depressingly similar to that of the pamphlet war productions of the 1630s.<sup>82</sup> On a more edifying level, Peter Talbot and Oliver Plunkett published pamphlets on the primacy, at Dublin, in the 1670s. Abroad, Irish theological printing continued, generally directed at specialized continental audiences. However, copies of *Saul exrex...* (Louvain, 1662), written by Cork-born Louvain professor John Sinnich (1603–66), the apostle of the rigorist moral system called tutorism, turned up in a number of eighteenth-century Irish clerical libraries.<sup>83</sup> Other prolific Irish theologians were the Jesuit Richard Archdekin (1618–93), whose *Praecipuae Controversiae Fidei* was published in Louvain in 1671 and the very prolific, and controversial, Raymond Caron.<sup>84</sup> After 1674, some Gaelic works were printed on the polyglot press of Propaganda Fide in Rome, including Francis Molloy, *Lóchrann na gCreidmheach*.<sup>85</sup> Towards the end of the seventeenth century, Irish Franciscans, departing for the Irish mission, petitioned Propaganda Fide to provide them with copies of Molloy's *Lóchrann*, his *Grammatica Hiberno-Latina*, the *Rituale Sacramentorum Romanum*, and a catechism.<sup>86</sup>

Despite the troubled conditions of the 1690s, some Catholics accumulated impressive libraries as the 'notebook' of Luke Wadding, Bishop of Ferns, reveals.<sup>87</sup> It provides evidence of a broadly based, relatively sophisticated Catholic reading public in south-east Ireland at this time. Most significantly, Wadding lists 'bookes given and bestowed on relations, friends, benefactors, poore gentry and widdowes, children etc', which include six dozen copies of

<sup>81</sup> See Patrick Comerford, *Inquisition* (Waterford, 1645, ESTC R170223), introduction. See William K. Sessions, *The First Printers in Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny Pre-1700* (York: Sessions, 1990), 5.

<sup>82</sup> See T. C. Barnard, '“Parlour Entertainment in an Evening?”: Histories of the 1640s', in Micheál Ó Siochrá (ed.), *Kingdoms in Crisis: Ireland in the 1640s* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 20–43.

<sup>83</sup> There was a second edition in 1665. See Claeys Bouuaert, 'Jean Sinnich défenseur de Jansenius', in *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*, 31 (1955), 406–17.

<sup>84</sup> *Roma Triumphans Septicollis...* (Antwerp, 1653); *Apostolatus Evangelicus Missionariorum Regularium per Universum Mundum Expositus* (Antwerp, 1653); *Controversiae Generales Fidei Contra Infideles Omnes Judaeos, Mahometanos, Paganos* (Paris, 1660).

<sup>85</sup> B. Egan, 'Notes on the Propaganda Fide Printing Press', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 2 (1959), 115–24.

<sup>86</sup> Benignus Millett OFM, 'Irish Franciscans ask Propaganda to Give Them Books for their Pastoral Ministry in Ireland 1689–1696', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 44–5 (2002–3), 63–75. The catechism remains untraced but it may have been one published under Cardinal Howard's patronage.

<sup>87</sup> P. J. Corish, 'Bishop Wadding's Notebook', *Archivum Hibernicum*, 29 (1970), 49–114.

Nicholas Caussin's *The Christian Diurnal*, eighteen copies of Francis de Sales's *Introduction to the Devout Life*, twenty dozen of Bellarmine's 'small catechisme', and 'one hundred dozen of Christian doctrine composed by Fr P. Ledesma'.<sup>88</sup> The fare is overwhelmingly foreign in origin and English in language, faithfully reflecting the two defining qualities of print in Ireland since its arrival in the sixteenth century. More striking is the size of the book stock, the evidence of a distribution network, and the fact that widows and children could read.

The library of Piers Creagh, Archbishop of Dublin, contained a great number of Greek and Latin classics as well as works on canon law and history. His was a less pastoral library than Wadding's and contained a preponderance of Jesuit works.<sup>89</sup> William Daton, Bishop of Ossory, kept a few Jansenist titles on his shelves but they were more than balanced by orthodox Counter-Reformation material, mostly in Latin.<sup>90</sup> Interestingly, Daton's collection contained literary echoes of the deep political divisions in the Irish Catholic community, including Walter Enos's polemical *Alexipharmacum*... (1644) and Nicholas French's *Unkind Deserter*... (1676).

By the eighteenth century it was clear that the confessional context, which had heretofore straightjacketed the book in Ireland, was loosening. In common with its European neighbours, the country entered a complex process of secularization, characterized by the consolidation of the public sphere as a semi-autonomous cultural space. This was closely linked to rising literacy rates and had consequences for print, as it eventually created a public sphere controlled by neither state nor church, even if manipulable by both. Perhaps the most significant local dimension of the phenomenon was the Church of Ireland's tacit renunciation of its official aspiration to convert Irish Catholics and its implicit disavowal of the prerogative to control national culture.

Of course published religious bigotry remained vigorously sincere. In 1707 Richard Willis reminded Protestant readers of the need to secure their estates as 'papists are obliged by the laws of their religion to persecute Protestants'.<sup>91</sup> John Temple's *The Irish Rebellion* rolled regularly off Dublin presses;<sup>92</sup> a proposal 'to enact the castration or gelding of popish ecclesiastics'

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>89</sup> Canice Mooney OFM (ed.), 'The Library of Archbishop Piers Creagh', *Reportorium Novum*, 1 (1955-7), 117-39.

<sup>90</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P. (ed.), 'The Library of Bishop William Daton of Ossory, 1698', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 20 (1978), 30-57.

<sup>91</sup> [Richard Willis], *An Address to those of the Roman Communion in England: Occasioned by the Late Act of Parliament, for the Further Preventing the Growth of Popery. Recommended to those of the Roman Communion in Ireland, upon a like Occasion* (Dublin, 1709, ESTC T163556). See Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701-1739', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 39-40 (1997-8), 117.

<sup>92</sup> There were Dublin editions in 1713, 1714, and 1724. See Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701-1739', *passim*.

was published in Dublin in 1710,<sup>93</sup> followed, in 1725, by a recommendation to transport every Catholic out of Ireland.<sup>94</sup> One hopes that it was in the spirit of Swift's *Modest Proposal* that an author recommended, in 1732, that all popish girls, at the age of eleven, should 'make public recantation of their errors' or else 'be splayed, and so rendered incapable of ever bearing children to inherit the obstinacy of their unfortunate parent'.<sup>95</sup> Unsurprisingly, stories of conversions from Catholicism to the state religion were gleefully reproduced,<sup>96</sup> and, in general, Irish Protestants were advised to keep their distance from Catholics. One outraged writer, something of a spoilsport one suspects, took particular exception to members of the state church attending concerts by Italian musicians in the chapel of the Dominican nuns in Dublin's Channel Row in 1727.<sup>97</sup>

Anti-Catholic literature always had its Irish audience, especially in times of international crisis, as during the 'Forty-Five', but, as the century wore on, the old bigotry lost its edge. In the 1730s, for instance, Dublin newspapers began to report the deaths of Catholic clergymen, often in reverential tones.<sup>98</sup> Irish Protestant religious prejudice became disassociated from the concrete goal of conversion and focused instead on opposing Catholic pretensions to political activity and social equality.<sup>99</sup> Archbishop King, as early as 1711, confided to Dean Swift, regarding a petition to Parliament for aid to print religious material in Gaelic, 'We shall, I believe, have some considerations of methods to convert the natives; but I do not find that it is desired by all that they should be converted.'<sup>100</sup> He was right. Crucially, Protestant gentry support for the conversion of Catholics, which was never strong, declined further in the eighteenth century. In 1758, Sir Robert Wilmot, the London-based secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, explained this in terms of the gentry's

<sup>93</sup> *Reasons Humbly Offer'd to Both Houses of Parliament, for a New Law to Enact the Castration or Gelding of Popish Ecclesiastics, in this Kingdom... As the Best Way to Prevent the Growth of Popery* (Dublin, 1710, ESTC T133849). This was a Dublin reprint of a London edition of 1700.

<sup>94</sup> Charles Owen, *An Alarm to Protestant Princes and People...* (Dublin, 1725, ESTC T89506). See Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–1739', 131.

<sup>95</sup> *A serious proposal for the entire destruction of popery in Ireland. Humbly offered to the consideration of our great \*\*\*\*\** (Dublin, 1732, ESTC T207270). See Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–1739', 146–7.

<sup>96</sup> John Clayton, *A Sermon Preach'd at St. Michan's Church in Dublin, February the 23rd, 1700. Upon Receiving in the Communion of the Church of England, the Hon.ble Sir Terence Mac-Mahon, k.nt & bar.net and Christopher Dunn, Converts from the Church of Rome...* (Dublin, 1700, ESTC R37725).

<sup>97</sup> Stephen Radcliff, *A Serious and Humble Enquiry Whether it be Lawful, Prudent or Convenient that a Toleration of Popery Should be Enacted by Authority of Parliament?*... (Dublin, 1727, ESTC T58871). See Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–1739', 136.

<sup>98</sup> For example *The Flying Post*, 14 June 1739, 15 August 1739. In general see John Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism in the Eighteenth-Century Press* (Maynooth: Catholic Record Society, 1965), *passim*.

<sup>99</sup> Jane McKee, 'Irish Church Libraries and the French Enlightenment', in Graham Gargett and Geraldine Sheridan (eds.), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment 1700–1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 213–32.

<sup>100</sup> See Charles Simeon King (ed.), *A Great Archbishop of Dublin* (Dublin, 1908), 294–5.

'choosing rather to keep the countrymen in their present condition of popery, ignorance and slavery, than to civilise them and make them Protestant, which would tend in some measure to make them independent'.<sup>101</sup> John Richardson still cherished hopes for the conversion of the Irish in 1711 but his was an isolated voice.<sup>102</sup> Most Irish Anglicans saw little benefit in mass conversion and without the goal of conversion, the traditional Protestant religious press lost its national purpose, becoming the apange, in theory and in fact, of one religious denomination. In the longer term this left the way open for other religious agencies to manage and manipulate the nascent public sphere. In Ireland, as in other western European countries, the press was now becoming a constitutive part of a complex system for the exchange of political, cultural, and religious sentiment. Religious agencies, even state churches, would have to fight, like everyone else, for their share.

These changed circumstances created a golden opportunity for the development of the Catholic press in Ireland. While the improvement in domestic circumstances certainly facilitated the remarkable growth of the eighteenth-century Catholic print trade, the Irish clerical colonies abroad also played their part in priming the Irish Catholic reading public.<sup>103</sup> Irish clerics abroad built up important personal and college libraries and participated in their own right in the burgeoning French and Spanish public spheres. Richard Moore who died in Paris in 1723 owned twenty volumes, mostly of devotion, while John Courtin possessed fifty titles, almost all of a pious nature. Michael Moore, who died in 1726, amassed 1,255 volumes, which he later bequeathed to the Irish Collège des Lombards.<sup>104</sup> Later in the century Luke Joseph Hooke, sometime classmate of Denis Diderot, avid admirer of Montesquieu and patron of the abbé de Prades, introduced Irish clerics to the Catholic enlightenment's effort to marry tradition with intellectual innovation.<sup>105</sup> When they returned home, a few of these Catholic clergy had sufficient resources and interest to build up libraries of their own.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>101</sup> Cited in S. J. Connolly, *Religion, Law and Power: The Making of Protestant Ireland 1660–1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 306.

<sup>102</sup> *A Proposal for the Conversion of the Popish Natives of Ireland of the Establish'd Religion; With Reasons upon which it is Grounded: and an Answer to the Objection made to it* (Dublin, 1711, ESTC T18076). See Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–1739', 118.

<sup>103</sup> For an idea of the scale and quality of these colonies see L. W. B. Brockliss and P. Ferté, 'Irish Clerics in France in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Statistical Survey', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 87 C (1987), 527–72.

<sup>104</sup> Liam Chambers, 'The Life and Writings of Michael Moore (c. 1639–1726)', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, NUI Maynooth, 2001, 264–94.

<sup>105</sup> Thomas O'Connor, *An Irish Theologian in Enlightenment France: Luke Joseph Hooke 1714–96* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995) and 'The Role of Irish Clerics in Paris University Politics 1730–40', *History of Universities*, 15 (1997–9), 193–226.

<sup>106</sup> Padraig Ó Suilleabhain (ed.), 'The Library of a Parish Priest of the Penal Days', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 6–7 (1963–4), 234–44.



Cornelius Nary was perhaps the first Irish priest to pursue a public, literary career in Dublin in the eighteenth century. He was parish priest of St Michan's and his ministry saw the rigours of occasional but real persecution mellow slowly and unevenly into grudging tolerance.<sup>107</sup> Thanks to his French training, his output had a continental hue, which considerably brightened the generally undercoat colours of local Catholic printing at the time. The continental influence is particularly evident in his earliest ventures, notably his ambitious *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...*, which appeared in 1718. Unfortunately for Nary, his work bore the approbation of a number of Sorbonne doctors, a fact sufficient in the doctrinally giddy decade following the publication of the anti-Jansenist papal bull *Unigenitus* in 1713 to provoke the ire of the Roman authorities, who banned it in 1722. It was better received by local Protestants, one of whom advised Catholics to read it, considerably offering a Protestant Bible *gratis* if Nary's proved unavailable.<sup>108</sup> Nary's *A New History of the World* was printed by Edward Waters for the Catholic bookseller Luke Dowling in 1720 'to obviate the objections of the Atheists, Deists, Pre-Adamites and Libertines of this age'.<sup>109</sup> Included in the volume was a list of about 150 subscribers, eloquent testimony to a discerning, monied Catholic readership. On a more mundane level, Nary prepared *A Catechism for the Use of his Parish* in 1718. The volume did not escape the eagle eye of Peter Manby S.J., who accused the author of entertaining Jansenist sentiments.<sup>110</sup> Nary also descended occasionally into the political fray and may have written *The Case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland*, which appeared anonymously in 1723. It argued that the proposed new penal laws were unnecessary and a breach of the treaty of Limerick.<sup>111</sup> Apologetics, however, was his first love and from the late 1720s until his death he diverted his readers with contributions to debates with Protestant divines, notably with Edward Synge, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Tuam. His *Appendix to the Letter and Rejoinder in Answer to the Charitable Address, and Reply of his Grace Edward...* presented 'some further proofs... to support the truth of the real presence and transubstantiation... against which our adversaries level their keenest arrows'.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Patrick Fagan, *Dublin's Turbulent Priest: Cornelius Nary 1658–1738* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1991).

<sup>108</sup> *A Serious and Friendly Address to the Roman Catholics of Ireland to Read the Scriptures in a Language they Understood. Occasioned by Dr. Nary's late Translation of the New Testament into English* (Dublin, 1721, ESTC T215978).

<sup>109</sup> Fagan, *Dublin's Turbulent Priest*, 91.

<sup>110</sup> Sylvester Lloyd's *General Instruction, by Way of Catechism...* (Dublin, 1723) suffered from the same criticism, with, perhaps, more justification. See Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–1739', 129.

<sup>111</sup> The only text is found in Hugh Reily, *The impartial history of Ireland* (London, reprinted, 1742).

<sup>112</sup> Fenning, 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1701–1739', 153.

While Nary wielded his prolific pen, Dublin's Catholic printers were becoming more visible and better organized. Thanks to the unofficial network of grammar schools, the congregations of the local Catholic chapels, clustered about High Street and Bridge Street, developed healthy appetites for religious literature, making the fortunes of the more successful 'chapel printers'.<sup>113</sup> Although the latter were excluded from the printers' Guild of St Luke the Evangelist until 1793, they were allowed associate membership as quarter-brothers, which gave them the right to trade and provide a wide range of foreign books for the Catholic market in Dublin and the provinces.<sup>114</sup> Harassment by the authorities was a fact of life, especially in the early part of the century. In 1707 two Catholic booksellers, James Malone and Luke Dowling, were taken into custody and fined for every copy of *A Manual of Devout Prayers* they had published. In 1709 and again in 1723, the custom house in Dublin seized boxes and chests of 'Romish books brought over from France'.<sup>115</sup>

State interference, however, lessened as the century wore on and Catholic booksellers were free to provide the large country trade with prayer books, books of devotion, and chapbooks. Gother's *A Papist Misrepresented and Represented*, published by Philip Bowes in 1750, addressed 'all the Catholic booksellers of Dublin', indicating some sort of informal association.<sup>116</sup> There was succession in book stock, suggesting an important degree of stability. In 1719, for instance, Luke Dowling took over James Malone's stock, and in 1740 Thomas Brown and Thomas Fleming between them acquired the stock of Luke Dillon. Brown apparently made a fortune in the trade, and later in the century, Patrick Wogan (1771–1810) was reputed a millionaire.<sup>117</sup> These success stories were the exception but there was money to be made in the book business, especially in supplying the lucrative country market. The first really prolific Catholic printer was Ignatius Kelly, who traded from 1738 until his death in 1753. From the advertisements bound at the back of some of his twenty-five known works we learn that he published about 120 in all. These included a *Gospel of St Luke*, which sold for a few pence and an 'Eye-Chart' setting out Catholic doctrine on a single sheet, 'suitable to be framed' and hung up in houses.

As print became cheaper, distribution networks improved with better transport. By the middle of the century, Catholic publishers in Dublin were printing runs of 700–800 for works of piety. Subscriber lists ran from 220 for

<sup>113</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'Prayer Books and Pamphlets', *Seanchas Ard Mhacha*, 16 (1994), 95.

<sup>114</sup> Brady, *Catholics and Catholicism*, 10, 42, 50.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 10, 33.

<sup>116</sup> James W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin 1670–1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 30.

<sup>117</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1770–82', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 43 (2001), 162.

a *Life of St Francis Xavier* in 1743 to nearly 2,000 for a Cork Bible in 1816.<sup>118</sup> In 1776, Patrick Wogan and P. Bean attached to an edition of Claude Fleury's *An Historical Catechism* a catalogue of books for sale comprising 105 titles of which ninety-six were either doctrinal or devotional books published for Catholics. Pious books were reaching broad audiences in urban and rural Ireland where a parochial network facilitated distribution. In the second half of the century, Catholic bishops published diocesan statutes, pastoral letters, and catechisms in large numbers.<sup>119</sup> For them, print was an important means of ensuring doctrinal orthodoxy, moral improvement, and political obedience. From the number of titles coming off the presses and the preponderance of European and English titles it may be safely concluded that the so called 'devotional revolution' was in full swing in the eighteenth century. Print evidence reveals that formal devotion to the Holy Name and the Rosary was popular as early as 1725; devotion to St Joseph was already established by 1744 and novenas to St Francis Xavier were published in Dublin in 1749.<sup>120</sup>

Catholic printers established themselves in provincial centres. In Waterford, the printer Jeremiah Calwell was active from 1747 to 1761 and nearly all his surviving productions are religious: funeral sermons, directories for the divine office, and apologetical works.<sup>121</sup> In Cork, Catholic religious printing had begun by 1755, and, by 1830, at least 250 religious titles had come off the local presses.<sup>122</sup> Religious printing started in Limerick a little after Cork and later still in Kilkenny, Strabane, and Carrick-on-Suir. Provincial success depended on population density and literacy rates, facts that explain the late arrival of the religious print to Galway. Scarcely any Catholic books appeared in Belfast, despite its vigorous book trade, until the 1790s.

Less state and church control also meant diversification and Catholics began to publish newspapers. James Hoey Jr.'s *Dublin Mercury* was the semi-official newspaper during the Townshend administration (1767–72). Works of devotion, pastoral aids for clergy, official church publications, and model sermons jostled for attention with more politically motivated work that pleaded for exemptions to the penal legislation, encouraged Catholic loyalty, or made the case for toleration.<sup>123</sup> Publication highlights included the Douai

<sup>118</sup> Pádraig Ó Súilleabháin, 'Catholic Books Printed in Ireland 1740–1820 Containing Lists of Subscribers', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 6–7 (1963–4), 231–3. <sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Fenning, 'Prayer Books and Pamphlets', 98.

<sup>121</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'The Catholic Press in Munster in the Eighteenth Century', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 20.

<sup>122</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'Cork Imprints of Catholic Historical Interest 1723–1804: A Provisional Check-list', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* 100 (1995), 129–48, and idem, 'Cork Imprints of Catholic Historical Interest 1805–1830: A Provisional Check-List (Part 2)', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 101 (1996), 115–42.

<sup>123</sup> *The Case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland: in Relation to the Ban Against the Growth of Popery, and Other Bills now Under Consideration* (Dublin, 1703, ESTC T189542, N40315, T21893); [Garrett] Darcy, *Dr Father Darcy's Reasons, Shewing, that the Clergy and Laity of the Church of Rome Might Safely Take the*

Bible, printed in five volumes at Dublin in 1763–4, the first complete edition of the Vulgate ever to appear in Ireland. In 1777 the *Missale Romanum*, 'the first ever printed in these kingdoms', appeared at the instigation of Archbishop John Carpenter of Dublin (1729–86), and a year later the splendid second edition of Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* rolled off the Dublin presses.

The retreat of the Irish language served to strengthen foreign domination of Catholic published titles. Bishop Richard Challoner was by far the most popular author among eighteenth-century Catholic Dubliners.<sup>124</sup> Also fashionable were Augustine, Thomas a Kempis, St Francis de Sales, Luis of Granada, and Lorenzo Scupoli.<sup>125</sup> Apart from Hugh McMahon's *Ius Primatiale* (hardly a popular title) and Luke Wadding's *A Small Garland of Pious and Godly Songs...*,<sup>126</sup> few titles were particularly local in flavour. However, local authors of pious works, like Martin Marlay of Meath, Thady O'Brien of Castlelyons, and William Gahan, were published and widely read. The Dominican John O'Connor was one of the rare Irish writers to come fresh to the spiritual field with his *Essay on the Rosary*. Archbishop James Butler of Cashel's famous catechism went through numerous editions, as did the bilingual catechism of Archbishop Michael O'Reilly of Armagh.<sup>127</sup> One of the most popular Gaelic titles in print was Bishop James Gallagher's *Sixteen Irish Sermons in an Easy and Familiar Stile* (1736), reprinted in 1767. Tadhg Gaelach Ó Súilleabháin's *Pious Miscellany*, a collection of eighteenth-century religious verse, ran to some twenty printed editions between 1802 and 1842. It was the only printed work in Irish to rival English language texts.<sup>128</sup> However, bishops like John Carpenter of Dublin were solicitous of their Gaelic-speaking flock and catered for them, especially during the religious revival associated with the Jubilee Year of 1776 when Carpenter commissioned Charles O'Connor to prepare a Gaelic appendix to the *Rituale*, published in the same year.<sup>129</sup>

In the eighteenth century the scribal tradition, despite the penetration of the print, remained vigorous but deeply conservative. Scribes continued to

*Oath, and Conform to the Government...* (Dublin, 1710, ESTC N61034); *Advice to the Romish Catholick Priests of Ireland to take Speedily the Oath of Abjuration* (Dublin, 1713, ESTC N55251).

<sup>124</sup> One of his works, *Think well on't*, was published in Irish.

<sup>125</sup> For the general picture, see Thomas Wall, *The Sign of Doctor Hay's Head* (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1958). See Frans Blom, *English Catholic Books 1701–1800*, 2nd edn. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1996).

<sup>126</sup> First published in Ghent in 1684.

<sup>127</sup> Michael Tynan, *Catholic Instruction in Ireland 1720–1950* (Dublin: Veritas, 1985), 18–67.

<sup>128</sup> Ó Ciosáin, 'Printed Popular Literature in Irish 1750–1850', 45–57; Niall Ó Ciosáin, 'Printing in Irish and Ó Súilleabháin's *Pious Miscellany*', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 87–99.

<sup>129</sup> William Hawkes, 'Irish Form of Preparation for Mass in the Eighteenth Century', *Reportorium Novum*, 1 (1956–8), 183–92, and Thomas Wall, 'Archbishop John Carpenter and the Catholic Revival 1770–1786', *Reportorium Novum*, 1 (1956–8), 173–82. For Carpenter's own interest in Irish see RIA, MS 23A8.

copy old favourites like Aodh Mac Aingil's *Scáthán Shacramuinte na hAithridhe* and Keating's *Tri Bior-ghaoithe an Bháis*. Little new material came on line. The continental seminaries contributed to religious printing in Gaelic. In Paris, for instance, a grant was used to print 'from time to time catechisms and other little works of piety in Irish, which will be given free to the student and ecclesiastics who return to Ireland for distribution'.<sup>130</sup> Production was slight, a fact suggestive not only of the increasing fragility of Gaelic culture but also that the era of Irish Catholicism's reliance on its continental colonies was drawing to a close.<sup>131</sup>

By the second half of the century, literacy rates were rising fast. John Brett, a Protestant clergyman, remarked in 1770 that 'for one native of Ireland who could read fifty years ago there are at least a hundred who can read now'.<sup>132</sup> Schooling was more accessible; more people could afford books and take time to read them. By mid-century, an educated Irish Christian of moderate means might have as many as twenty-five books in his library.<sup>133</sup> Religious communities fared even better. While the Dominican nuns of Drogheda had to make do with twenty-seven devotional pieces between them, the friars of Drogheda and Galway enjoyed a richer spiritual diet, with more than 150 titles in either friary, many of them practical pastoral resources. The Galway Augustinians had a more specialized, austere collection, including Jansenist works by Pascal, Quesnel, and Nicole.<sup>134</sup> Their library was designed as much to confirm members' vocational commitment as to encourage intellectual curiosity or pastoral engagement.<sup>135</sup>

The early-eighteenth-century library of John Donnelly, O.P., was that of a preacher, at once French, Jesuit, and homiletical in character.<sup>136</sup> From the contents of his shelves, Donnelly comes across as a man more interested in morality than dogma and more concerned about producing the following Sunday's homily than exploring philosophical questions. Two Gaelic items in his collection attract attention: Theobald Stapelton's *Catechismus Latino-Hibernus*

<sup>130</sup> Liam Swords, 'History of the Irish College, Paris', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 35 (1980), 58. See also McGuinne, *Irish Type Design*, 64–74, and Proinsias Mac Cana, *Collège des Irlandais Paris and Irish Studies* (Dublin: Institute for Advanced Studies, 2001), 115–21.

<sup>131</sup> B. Ó Cuív, 'Irish Language and Literature 1691–1845', in T. W. Moody and W. E. Vaughan (eds.), *A New History of Ireland: iv 1691–1800* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1986), 380; Patrick J. Corish, *The Catholic Community in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Dublin: Helicon, 1981), 109.

<sup>132</sup> John Brett, *Judgement of Truth* (Dublin, 1770), 161.

<sup>133</sup> M. Castelyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland: The Long Traced Pedigree* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984), 84–7.

<sup>134</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'The Library of the Augustinians of Galway in 1731', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 31–2 (1989–90), 162–95.

<sup>135</sup> Louis Châtellier, 'Conclusion', in Bernard Dompnier and Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard (eds.), *Les Religieux et Leur Livres à l'Époque Moderne* (Marseille, 2000), 290–1.

<sup>136</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'The Library of a Preacher of Drogheda: John Donnelly, O.P. (d. 1748)', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 18–19 (1976–7), 72–104.

(1639) and a copy of the 1608 Gaelic translation of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Donnelly may have collected his books in penal times but judging by his shelves there was nothing penal about his culture. The same might be said for the library of John Wickham, a Louvain-educated priest in Ferns who died in 1777. He had over 100 works, in French, English, and Latin. His interests were in Scripture, moral theology, canon law, and history but the evidence suggests that he sometimes treated his congregation to extracts from Milton and Pope. He possessed works by the Irish authors too, including Ignatius Brown, Francis Martin, and John Sinnich, notably the latter's *Confessionistarum Goliathismus Profligatus* (1657) and *Vindiciae Decalogiae Desumptae ex Saule ex-Rege* (1672). He certainly remained faithful to his Louvain education and, given his penchant for Sinnich, may have been exacting in the confessional.

The expansion of print meant that the Irish were reading more than their prayers and undoubtedly the broader range of printed material encouraged extensive reading, associated with maturing political cultures, to the detriment of intensive reading, one of the distinguishing characteristics of early modern religious cultures. This was one of the hallmarks of politicization and of the downward expansion of the public sphere. As dissenters and Catholics knocked on the door of the Irish political nation, the pros and cons of their admittance were vigorously debated in the print. A mountain of pamphlets were issued in 1787–9 during the 'paper war' ignited by Richard Woodward's *Present State of the Church of Ireland* (1787), which was a response to the Rightboy movement and a refutation of Catholic and Dissenter criticism of the established church's privileges.<sup>137</sup> Woodward was answered by James Butler II, Archbishop of Cashel (1744–91), in his *Justification of the Tenets* (1788) and by Arthur O'Leary and Edward Sheridan.<sup>138</sup> At the same time, the debate on the penal laws was carried on in print by Charles O'Connor (1710–91), John Curry (c.1710–80), and others.<sup>139</sup> Arthur O'Leary (1729–1802), perhaps the most prolific of them all, defended the oath of allegiance, repudiated the threatened French invasion of 1779, denounced the Whiteboys, but also made the case for liberty of conscience in *An Essay on Toleration* published in 1780.

Inevitably, the rise of literacy rates and the increased availability of a broader range of books made it more difficult for church authorities of all colours to police what their subjects read. With the absence, until the nineteenth century,

<sup>137</sup> See Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1783–1789', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 44–5 (2002–3), 79–126.

<sup>138</sup> See James Kelly, 'Interdenominational Relations and Religious Toleration in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: The "Paper War" of 1786–87', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 3 (1988), 39–67, and W. J. McCormack, *The Dublin Paper War of 1786–1788: A Bibliographical and Critical Inquiry Including an Account of the Origins of the Protestant Ascendancy* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993).

<sup>139</sup> Hugh Fenning, O.P., 'Dublin Imprints of Catholic Interest: 1760–69', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 42 (2000), 86.

of overall, controlling cultural determinants like Catholicism, nationalism, or unionism, public opinion, as an autonomous cultural space outside state and churches, grew haphazardly but inexorably. While the churches, especially the Catholic church, were relatively successful in adapting print to the needs of pastoral instruction and moral improvement, other agencies competed for the attention and loyalty of the expanding reading public. Opinion was also excited by a volatile succession of newspapers, handbills, public speeches, and rumours. A new age was dawning when in Belfast, in 1791, the United Irishmen called for the distribution of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* to all 'sects and denominations on the island'.

It took the churches time to adjust to the possibilities offered by the new mass politics. The initial reaction was one of suspicion, fed by the well-founded fear that public opinion would replace both God and monarchy as ultimate authority.<sup>140</sup> Archbishop Troy's 1793 pastoral letter to Dublin Catholics on the obligation of civil obedience was not the voice of a man ready to ride the tiger of popular politics.<sup>141</sup> Bishop William Coppinger of Cork and Ross was similarly disinclined. His pastoral letter of 1797, occasioned by the abortive French expedition to Bantry Bay, exhorted the clergy to offset 'the suggestion of designing men' and 'confound the malice of agitators'. This episcopal timidity was widely shared. William Gahan O.S.A.'s *Youth instructed* (Dublin, 1798), an attack on Paine's *Age of Reason* and a rare example of published comment from the lower clergy on the radical literature of the period, was similarly unenthusiastic about the new thinking.<sup>142</sup> The Irish bishops, the greater part of the clergy, and many of the laity remained firm in their opposition to any form of agitation and used the press to calm fiery spirits. Typical of their stance was William Coppinger's *A Remonstrance Addressed to the Lower Order of Roman Catholics* . . . published in Cork in 1798 and addressed to his 'dear deluded people'. It contained a strongly worded exhortation to Catholic rebels to lay down their arms.

However, some Irish Catholics and Protestants were as vulnerable to radical influences as they were impervious to episcopal admonitions.<sup>143</sup> The non-state and non-church informal education system, spread over so much of the

<sup>140</sup> Mona Ozouf, '“Public Opinion” at the End of the Old Regime', in T. C. W. Blanning (ed.), *The Rise and Fall of the French Revolution* (Chicago, 1996), 99; T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 103–82.

<sup>141</sup> *Pastoral Instructions Addressed to the Roman Catholics of the Archdiocese of Dublin on the Duties of Christian Citizens* (Dublin, 1793, ESTC T112231).

<sup>142</sup> Dáire Keogh, 'The French Disease': *The Catholic Church and Radicalism in Ireland 1790–1800* (Dublin: Four Courts Press 1993), 161–2.

<sup>143</sup> Linda Lunny, 'Knowledge and Enlightenment: Attitudes to Education in Early Nineteenth-Century East Ulster' in Mary Daly and David Dickson (eds.), *The Origins of Popular Literacy in Ireland: Language Change and Educational Development 1700–1920* (Dublin: Department of Modern History, Trinity College Dublin, and Department of Irish History, University College Dublin, 1990), 99.

country, facilitated popular politicization in the 1790s.<sup>144</sup> Even for some better-off Catholics radical thought provided the opportunity to cut the Gordian knot of the Catholic question and move the debate from accommodating Catholics in an existing system to changing the system itself. Moderates like Theobald McKenna, publicist for the Catholic Committee from 1791, advocated a root-and-branch reform of the Irish *ancien régime* in his *A Review of Some Interesting Periods of Irish History* (1786).<sup>145</sup> Up and down the socio-economic ladder, Catholics, some associated with the United Irishmen, were willing to translate the radical rhetoric of the *Northern Star*, the *Cork Gazette*, the *Union Star*, and the *Roscrea Southern Star* into militant action.<sup>146</sup>

By the end of the eighteenth century, vigorous domestic print was an indispensable instrument for any group anxious to exercise influence on nascent public opinion. Thanks to its eighteenth-century investment in the formation of literate audiences for the religious press, the Catholic church was well placed to influence opinion at the turn of the century. In the following decades it pushed home its advantage against both Protestant and radical rivals.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Kevin Whelan, 'The Republic in the Village: The Dissemination and Reception of Popular Literature in the 1790s', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 133.

<sup>145</sup> Cadoc Leighton, *Catholicism in a Protestant Kingdom: A Study of the Irish Ancien Régime* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1994), 136–7.

<sup>146</sup> Liam Chambers, *Rebellion in Kildare 1790–1803* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 28.

<sup>147</sup> See S. J. Connolly, '“The Moving Statue and the Turtle Dove”: Approaches to the History of Irish Religion', *Irish Economic and Social History*, 31 (2004), 1–22.



# Political Publishing, 1550–1700

*James Kelly*

The employment of print as a medium through which political information and ideas were conveyed emerged slowly in Ireland. For nearly a century from its inception in 1551, the combination of limited technological capacity, rigid state control, and a small audience ensured the production of a thematically narrow range of political print. Exemplified by its pre-eminent form—the proclamation—its primary purpose was to provide summary statements of official thinking. This state of affairs prevailed until the 1640s when the breakdown in the authority of the state permitted the expression in print for the first time of different political viewpoints. Although these were statements of mutually incompatible positions rather than contributions to an evolving public discourse, their production constituted a significant stage in the creation of a culture of political print that neither the Commonwealth nor the restored House of Stuart were able fully to reverse. Both regimes were largely able to control what was produced, but this did not inhibit an identifiable increase in the availability of political print as the state realized that it was in its interest to appease rather than to resist the appreciating demand from the expanding constituency of literate Protestants, who were the primary consumers of such material. Restrictions remained in place, but the will to enforce them strictly eased, and when the state chose in the 1690s to forsake active censorship, the improved technological and organizational capacity of the print industry permitted a rapid expansion in the availability of political print. This paved the way for the emergence in the eighteenth century of a recognizable public sphere that was arguably print's most important contribution to 'the growth of civic engagement in public affairs'.<sup>1</sup>

## The Origins of Government Printing

Consistent with the fact that Humphrey Powell, Ireland's first printer, received state support to establish his operation in Dublin in the 1550s,

<sup>1</sup> Joep Leerssen, *Hidden Ireland, Public Sphere* (Galway: Arlen House, 2002), 33.

his output was overwhelmingly political in character.<sup>2</sup> Given the patently political nature of the developing struggle between the Reformation and Counter-Reformation for the allegiance of the population, one can legitimately argue that Powell's first text—a reprint of the English *Book of Common Prayer*—and other publications aimed at promoting the cause of Protestantism were as much political as religious in thrust and purpose.<sup>3</sup> The case is more clear-cut with regard to quotidian official publications—pre-eminently proclamations (most of which do not survive)—and statutes, although it can be countered in respect of the former that they might more accurately be characterized as administrative devices, and of the latter that they had more to do with the law rather than politics.<sup>4</sup> This is true certainly of many publications in both categories, but proclamations such as those produced in Dublin in 1561 indicting Shane O'Neill and in 1595 and 1600 seeking the apprehension of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and 'other principall traytors', had an obvious political purpose.<sup>5</sup> The fact that they were issued in the name of the monarch or Lord Deputy and Council of Ireland, and that the royal crest preceded the main text served to accent the authority of the expanding apparatus of English government in Ireland.

This impression was reinforced in the early seventeenth century, as one of the outcomes of the successful Tudor conquest was a greater resort to the printing press as an instrument of policy. The grant in 1604 to John Franckton, who had issued proclamations on the Crown's behalf since 1600, of a patent empowering him to act as the King's Printer in Ireland attested to official recognition of the potential value of print in the business of government as well as to the determination to control what was issued. Thus, the concession to Franckton of the 'full, sole and complete authority and power to print all... manner of books' was granted with the explicit purpose of preventing the publication of works 'contrary, repugnant... or scandalous to our laws or government'. Since Franckton did not aspire either to print or to import such texts, he encountered no problems in that respect. However, his failure to make available books on acceptable subjects proved less satisfying to those who anticipated that he could meet the growing

<sup>2</sup> M. Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000), 465–6; D. B. Quinn, 'Information about Dublin Printers, 1556–1573, in English Financial Records', *Irish Book Lover*, 28 (1942), 112–13.

<sup>3</sup> *The Booke of Common Praier* (Dublin, 1551, ESTC S93748); *A Breve Declaration of Certain Principall Articles of Religion* (Dublin, 1566, ESTC S112215); Mary Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984), 43.

<sup>4</sup> Quinn, 'Information', 112–13. For surviving proclamations, see Tony Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word* (Dublin: Eamon De Búrca, 1997), nos. 3532–51.

<sup>5</sup> *The Queenes Majesties Proclamation Against the Earle of Tirone...* (Dublin, 1595, ESTC S124104); *By the L[ord] Deputie and Councell, Whereas Hugh Neale...* (Dublin, 1600, ESTC S124049).

demand, and in 1618 the King's Printer's patent was granted to the London Society of Stationers.<sup>6</sup>

Based on Gillespie's calculation that an average of 4.3 books were produced annually in Ireland in the twenty years following Franckton's displacement compared with 0.6 per annum during the time that he held the King's Printer's patent, it may appear that he was simply not up to the challenge of supplying the diet of school readers, classical texts, works of popular piety, histories, and popular tales that the emerging Anglophone market desired.<sup>7</sup> One must put the criticism (much of it interested) aimed in his direction in perspective, however, since he was not inactive in the production of political print.<sup>8</sup> Consistent with the pattern evident during the final decades of the sixteenth century, proclamations featured prominently, and the production of longer print runs attests to their growing importance. It is hazardous even to speculate how the literate public engaged with these texts, but the decision of the corporation of Youghal to copy proclamations into the corporation book, allied to the fact that the text of a number survive in manuscript, suggests that they were subject to intensive scrutiny. Proclamations were certainly crucial to the capacity of central government to communicate its decisions, for in the aftermath of the Nine Years War, which ended in 1603, as well as the anticipated pronouncements addressing law and order and administrative issues, crucial political decisions appertaining to the confiscation of the lands of O'Neill and O'Donnell, the apprehension of Cahir O'Doherty, and the introduction of anti-recusancy regulations were promulgated in this form.<sup>9</sup>

The embryonic culture of political print exemplified by the proclamation was augmented by a small number of publications of an allied character. These included an account of Cahir O'Doherty's rebellion and a commentary (of English origin) on the intentions of Catholics.<sup>10</sup> However, consistent with

<sup>6</sup> M. Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent, 1600–1800', *Irish Booklore*, 4 (1980), 79–80; eadem, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 2–3.

<sup>7</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 1–13; idem, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', *IESH*, 15 (1988), 81–8. Gillespie has calculated that the printers' output in 1640 was 1 title for 8,800 persons in England and 1 for 191,000 in Ireland.

<sup>8</sup> W. A. Jackson (ed.), *Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company 1602 to 1640* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1957), 107–8, 110, 359–60.

<sup>9</sup> Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland', 2; *By the King, Whereas we are Informed that our Subjects* ([Dublin, 1605], STC, 14155); *By the Lord Deputie and Council, For as much as is Known . . . [flight of earls]* (Dublin, 1607, STC, 14159); *By the Lord Deputie and Council, Whereas Sir Cahir Odoghertie . . .* (Dublin, 1608, ESTC S124044).

<sup>10</sup> Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, *An Answer to Certaine Scandalous Papers, Scattered Abroad Under Colour of a Catholicke Admonition* (Dublin, 1606, ESTC S91392); *The Over-Throw of an Irish rebell, in a Late Battaille: or the Death of Sir Carey Adoughterie* (Dublin, 1608, ESTC S106353).

its nascent state, publications of a more formal legal import featured more prominently. This category embraces single acts as well as a 'compendious collection' of those 'auncient English-statutes' that applied to Ireland.<sup>11</sup> The most overtly ideological work of this kind was Sir John Davies' *Le primer report des cases*, published in Dublin in 1615, which offered a legal rationale for the strategy of completing the conquest of Ireland with which Davies is identified.<sup>12</sup>

The assumption by the Company of Stationers in 1618 of the monopoly to print and distribute books in Ireland did not bode well for an early improvement in the range of available political print. Indeed, the forceful affirmation by the Company's factors of their resolve 'to take and seize . . . all Popish and prohibited Bookes, Volumes, Pictures and other things forfeit, or to become forfeited' and to enforce their exclusive entitlement to publish and to sell 'all . . . Books, Volumes, Statutes, Proclamations, Almanacks, or other Pamphlets' printed and imported into Ireland indicated their essentially conservative intentions.<sup>13</sup> As a result, although the number of titles increased during the 1620s, they fall into familiar categories. A high proportion of official publications (proclamations in the main) served a primarily administrative purpose, and they were supplemented by more obviously political statements 'concerning the Planters in Ulster', 'the banishment of Jesuites and priests', the accession of Charles I, 'deferring the assembly of parliament', and other issues.<sup>14</sup> A conscious effort was made also to elevate the profile of the Crown through the publication of James I's speech to the Westminster parliament in 1621, and a paean in celebration of Prince Charles's return from Spain in 1624.<sup>15</sup> The publication in 1621 of Sir Richard Bolton's edition of *The Statutes of Ireland*, the most comprehensive work of its kind, is also noteworthy,<sup>16</sup> while the increased number of tracts devoted to the promotion of Protestantism was also significant in the ideological formation of Irish Protestantism. These include a new edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*

<sup>11</sup> *An Act for the Graunt of one Entire Subsidie* . . . (Dublin, 1615, STC, 14133); *A Compendious Collection . . . of all the Auncient English-Statutes now in Force Within Ireland* (Dublin, [1617], STC, 17836.5).

<sup>12</sup> Sir John Davies, *Le Primer Report des Cases & Matters en ley . . . en les Courts del Roy en Ireland* (Dublin, 1615, STC, 6361).

<sup>13</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland', 82; Thomas Downes and Felix Kingston, *To all Christian People to Whom this Present Writing Shall Come* ([Dublin, 1618], ESTC S3890).

<sup>14</sup> Thomas Downes, *Books as they are Sold Bound, at London. At Dublin* ([Dublin, 1620?], ESTC S3110); *A Proclamation for the Banishment of Jesuites and Priests* (Dublin, 1623, STC, 14185); *A Proclamation Concerning the Planters in Ulster* (Dublin, 1623, STC, 14186); *Whereas it hath Pleased Almighty God . . .* (Dublin, 1625, STC, 14191a); *A Proclamation for Deferring the Assembly of Parliament . . .* (Dublin, 1628, STC, 14214).

<sup>15</sup> *His Majesties Speech in the Upper House of Parliament* (Dublin, 1621, STC, 14399.5); Stephen Jerome, *Irelands Jubilee, or Joyes Io-Paen for Prince Charles . . .* (Dublin, 1624, ESTC S103354).

<sup>16</sup> *The Statutes of Ireland, Beginning the third yere of K[ing] Edward the second . . .* (Dublin, 1621, ESTC S112079).

published in 1621, and sermons by a variety of clerical eminences in support of the claim that the Church of Ireland was the only authentic expression of Irish Christianity.<sup>17</sup>

This argument was made most influentially by James Ussher in his *Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British*, first published in Dublin in 1623, in which he maintained that the Church of Ireland was the direct descendant of the church founded by Patrick.<sup>18</sup> Reinforced by James Ware's antiquarian endeavours, also first published in the 1620s,<sup>19</sup> the confidence this venerable genealogy gave the Church of Ireland was only limited by an abiding pessimism that can be identified in Richard Olmstead's *Sions Teares*, published in 1630.<sup>20</sup> More importantly for the development of a culture of public debate in which political print might thrive, it was challenged by Counter-Reformation controversialists such as William Malone, S.J. An extended exchange involving Ussher, Malone, and a number of prominent Protestants ensued.<sup>21</sup> Taken together with the pamphlets of Paul Harris published in the early 1630s accusing the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, Thomas Fleming, of masterminding an 'impious plot' to displace the secular clergy and 'bring all into the hands of the friars', these exchanges may be considered the first political debates conducted in print in Ireland.<sup>22</sup> Because they did not have access to print technology, Catholics were obliged to smuggle in their controversial literature from continental Europe, but the readiness of Ussher and others to engage with William Malone's 'reply', which was printed on the Continent (possibly Douai), is illustrative of the fact that the emerging anglophone culture of political print in Ireland was not confined to texts published in England and Ireland.

<sup>17</sup> *The Booke of Common Prayer*... (Dublin, 1621, ESTC S123400); Christopher Hampton, *The Threefold State of Man Upon Earth Discussed in Three Sermons*... (Dublin, 1620, ESTC S2712); Henry Leslie, *A Warning for Israel in a Sermon Preached at Christ Church in Dublin*... (Dublin, 1625, ESTC S102370); P. Kilroy, 'Sermon and Pamphlet Literature in the Irish Reformed Church 1613–34', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 33 (1975), 110–21.

<sup>18</sup> James Ussher, *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently Professed by the Irish and British* (Dublin 1623; 2nd edn., London, 1631, ESTC S118950).

<sup>19</sup> Sir James Ware, *De Praesulibus Lageniae, Sive Provinciae Dublinensis* (Dublin, 1628, ESTC S119478).

<sup>20</sup> Richard Olmstead, *Sions Teares Leading to Joy: or the Waters of Moral Sweetned* (Dublin, 1630, ESTC S120808); Kilroy, 'Sermon and Pamphlet Literature', 116–17.

<sup>21</sup> James Ussher, *An Answer to a Challenge Made by a Jesuite in Ireland*... (Dublin 1624, ESTC S118933); William Malone, *A Reply to Mr. James Ussher*... ([Douai], 1627, ESTC S1626); Roger Puttock, *A Rejoynder unto W. Malone's reply*... (Dublin, 1632, ESTC S100925); Bishop George Synge, *A Rejoynder to the Reply Published by the Jesuites under the Name of William Malone*... (Dublin, 1634, ESTC S118086).

<sup>22</sup> Paul Harris, *The Excommunication Published by the L[ord] Archbishop of Dublin Thomas Fleming... Against the Inhabitants of the Diocese of Dublin for Hearing the Masses of Peter Caddell and Paul Harris*... (Dublin, 1632, ESTC S124775); Paul Harris, *Exile Exiled, Occasioned by a Mandat from Rome Procured by Thomas Fleming... for the Banishment of Paul Harris*... ([Dublin], 1635, ESTC S119022).

The exclusive access Protestants had to print technology in Ireland encouraged them to supplement works of controversy with statements of doctrinal and organizational import.<sup>23</sup> Their interventions acquired a still more obvious political purpose during the late 1630s as evidenced by the publication in 1637 of Archbishop Laud's speech at the trial of a number of eminent Puritans at the Court of Star Chamber.<sup>24</sup> A few years later, when Charles I's inability to bring Scottish Presbyterians to heel threatened the political stability of Ireland as well as Britain, a number of anti-Presbyterian tracts were rushed off the Dublin press in support of the established church.<sup>25</sup> However, other than these works, and a handful of administrative manuals, the most striking feature of Thomas Wentworth's controversial viceroyalty (1633–40) was the modest use made of print to promote his absolutist style of government.

## The Years of Crisis

Had royal authority remained unchallenged, it is reasonable to surmise that Wentworth's reluctance to permit the free circulation of political print would have continued. Indeed, even when all he stood for came under sustained attack in 1640–1, culminating in an orchestrated campaign aimed at his destruction, little print was forthcoming in Wentworth's support.<sup>26</sup> His opponents had greater appreciation of the usefulness of the printing press to their cause, and one of the effects of the political crisis of 1640–1 was to increase the volume of political print in circulation. Initially, the focus was on providing the texts of parliamentary speeches and accounts of proceedings at Westminster,<sup>27</sup> but the outbreak of rebellion in October 1641 prompted a shift in direction. Grippled by alarm as a result of the proliferating reports of atrocities perpetrated against settlers, the Irish Lords Justices (William Parsons and John Borlase) authorized the publication of proclamations and other texts apprising the Protestant population of the evolving crisis in

<sup>23</sup> For example, *Constitutions and Canons ecclesiasticall...agreed...in Synod Begun at Dublin... 1634...* (Dublin, 1635, STC, 14265).

<sup>24</sup> William Laud, *A Speech Delivered in the Starre-chamber...* (Dublin, 1637, ESTC 104296).

<sup>25</sup> John Corbet, *The Epistle Congratulorie of Lysimachus Nicanor of the Societie of Jesu to the Covenanters of Scotland* (Dublin, 1640, ESTC S125477); Bishop John Maxwell, *Episcopacie not Abjured in His Majesties Realme of Scotland* ([Dublin], 1641, ESTC R21652).

<sup>26</sup> T. Kilburn and Anthony Milton, 'Public Context of Strafford's Trial and Execution', in J. F. Merritt (ed.), *The Political World of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford 1621–41* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 220–1, 236–41.

<sup>27</sup> For example, William Lenthall, *Mr Speaker, his Speech to his Majestie in Parliament, the Fifth of November* (Dublin, 1640, ESTC S93450).

the winter of 1640–1.<sup>28</sup> However, they were disinclined to authorize inflammatory English-style ‘atrocity’ tracts, so that even after the first phase of the crisis had passed, and officials felt sufficiently secure to order public fasts and to declare days of thanksgiving,<sup>29</sup> there was nothing approaching the surge in print in Dublin that occurred in London. The reason for this was partly technological; the fact that there was only one printing press in Dublin in the early 1640s meant that the capacity to develop innovative genres was very limited.<sup>30</sup> However, this does not explain why the increase in print output in 1641 was not sustained, and why the average number of titles produced annually between 1642 and 1646 averaged 12.8 and never exceeded twenty.<sup>31</sup> A more convincing explanation is to be found in the fact that, in contrast to London where the ‘political crisis offered the book trade new openings and possibilities that were quickly exploited’ by a printing industry and a literate audience large enough to sustain a wide range of publications, these conditions did not prevail in Dublin.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, though the oscillation of the pendulum of political power in the city during the 1640s between royalists, parliamentarians, and the Earl of Inchiquin ensured that each of these parties is represented in the modest list of political print that can be identified, none exercised sufficient influence or possessed the resources, intellectual or technical, to achieve long-term dominance. Each produced a selection of printed texts on the conduct of hostilities and a number of major issues, and each sought in so far as possible to ensure that its point of view was made known if for no other reason than, as one author explained, to discourage ‘false and erroneous copies, which too often are set forth with mighty disadvantage to the truth’.<sup>33</sup> The tracts and pamphlets that resulted were supplemented by other publications, less obviously partisan, that reported on events in England, but even with these, the diet of political print produced in Dublin was limited and conservative.<sup>34</sup> Significantly, it was less impressive than that produced by Confederate Catholics working out of Waterford and Kilkenny.

<sup>28</sup> *The Irish Petition to this Parliament in England, Shewing in what Distresse... they are... Likewise the Battell which the Scots have had* (London, 1641, ESTC R9527). The original Dublin printing of this work has not survived.

<sup>29</sup> By the Lords Justices and Councill, *Forasmuch as Almighty God...* (Dublin, 1642, Wing, I 395); *Whereas Many Malignant...* (Dublin 1642, ESTC R211450).

<sup>30</sup> Gillespie, ‘The Circulation of Print’, 37; John Barnard, ‘London Publishing, 1640–1660: Crisis, Continuity and Innovation’, *Book History*, 4 (2001), 11.

<sup>31</sup> Based on Clough’s analysis of Wing (E. A. Clough, *A Short Title Catalogue Arranged Geographically... up to... 1700* (London, 1969)) as cited in W. K. Sessions, *The First Printers in Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny Pre-1700* (York: Sessions, 1990), 199.

<sup>32</sup> Barnard, ‘London Publishing’, 1–3.

<sup>33</sup> *A True Relation of Such Passages and Proceedings of the Army of Dublin...* (Dublin, 1642, ESTC R1123).

<sup>34</sup> For example, *At the Parliament Begun... an Act for Adding unto and Explaining of Certain Clauses in Another Act... for the Speedie and Effectual Reducing of the Rebels... Ireland* (Dublin, 1642, Wing, E995B).

The greater coherence of the print produced at the behest of 'the Confederate Catholics of Ireland' derived in large part from their recognition that the printing press was crucial to their ability to prosecute their cause successfully. Persuaded of 'the incomparable good & benefit that doth redound to the commonwealth by . . . print' and of the damage done 'the Catholics of this kingdome' since 'the revolte from true religion' by their inability 'to publish', their Waterford printer Thomas Bourke argued persuasively that

as Soldiers with Swords, Pikes, and Guns doe fight for the restitution, and defence of that onely true Religion, soe it is meet and expedient that the Pen and the Print bestirre themselves also for so worthy a cause. . . .<sup>35</sup>

To this end, Bourke produced more than twenty titles between 1643 and 1646.<sup>36</sup> The best known is Patrick Darcy's 1641 *Argument* in support of the legislative autonomy of the Irish parliament. However, Bourke's press was also the source of texts in which the Confederates promulgated their 'grievances', made known the terms ('propositions') on which they would cease hostilities, refuted 'false and scandalous' misrepresentations, and encouraged 'the natives of Ireland to stand in defence of their Faith, King and Countrey against Parliamentary intruders'.<sup>37</sup>

These remained priorities when the centre of Confederation print shifted to Kilkenny in the mid-1640s. This resulted from the establishment by the Jesuits of a printing press in that city, and it seemed well justified as the fifty-two known works produced by George Sarrazin, S.J., between 1646 and 1649 comfortably exceeded that of Thomas Bourke, and sustained at first the image of a united and determined body.<sup>38</sup> However, major differences between the clerical and lay or 'peace' factions as to the terms upon which they were prepared to agree a peace with the Marquess of Ormond proved enduring; in 1646 the peace party was at a severe disadvantage when, deprived of access to print because the printing press was under clerical control, they were unable to counter 'the declarations of the ecclesiastical congregation'. Determined that this would not happen again, the secretary to the Confederate

<sup>35</sup> P[atrick] C[omerford], *The Inquisition of a Sermon . . . by Robert Daborne* (Waterford, 1644, ESTC R170223), printer's address.

<sup>36</sup> E. R. McClintock Dix, 'Printing in Waterford in the Seventeenth Century', *PRIA*, 32C (1916), 335–43; Sessions, *The First Printers*, part 1, 85–90.

<sup>37</sup> Patrick Darcy, *An Argument Delivered by Patricke Darcy, Esquire; by the Expresse Order of the House of Commons in the Parliament of Ireland . . . 9 Junii, 1641* (Waterford, 1643, ESTC R17661); *A Remonstrance of Grievances Presented to his Most Excellent Majestie in the Behalfe of the Catholics of Ireland* (Waterford, 1643, ESTC R26217); *The Propositions of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, Presented by their Commissioners . . . in April 1644* (Waterford, 1644, ESTC R36692); *Admonitions by the Supreme Councvll of the Confederat Catholics of Ireland . . . Against the Soleme League and Covenant . . .* (Waterford, 1643, ESTC R11171); *A Persuasive Letter Exhorting the Natives of Ireland to Stand in Defence of their Faith, King and Countrey Against Parliamentary Intruders . . .* (Waterford, 1645, ESTC R33387).

<sup>38</sup> Sessions, *The First Printers*, 179–212.



council commandeered the printing press in 1648 and this proved crucial in enabling the ‘peace’ party to achieve a decisive victory over the hardline clerical faction. Moreover, the importance of the press in determining the outcome was not lost on contemporaries; it was observed that the clerical party sustained an ‘incredible injury’ because it was unable ‘to print its ordinations and necessary answers’. The desperate attempts it made to close the propaganda gap by circulating statements of its position in manuscript underline just how much of a disadvantage it was by this date not to be in a position to employ print.<sup>39</sup>

Based upon this episode, it might be assumed that there was a large literate audience well equipped to extract meaning from the texts that trundled off the Waterford and Kilkenny presses. Since the font that was employed at Kilkenny and the manner in which print was organized at both locations mirrored that employed on mainland Europe, it can be assumed that the largely continentally trained clergy encountered few problems interacting with printed texts. The same claim can be made with confidence in respect of the Confederate lay members, many of whom were trained in the law. What is not clear is how widely this material circulated among those with less-developed reading skills. The fact that a majority of the texts (eighteen of the twenty-five items printed at Kilkenny in 1648 for example) were folio broadsides may have facilitated collective reading. However, the willingness of both Bourke and Sarrazin to use variable styles of print layout, small fonts, abbreviations, and interchangeable letters, to indulge inconsistent and variable orthography (attributable in one instance to the fact that the work at issue ‘was printed in severall places’), and for authors to pepper texts with italicized words and phrases, Latin and Biblical quotations (complete with marginal citation), complex language, and sophisticated concepts must have proved challenging to others.<sup>40</sup> All texts were not equally difficult, but the form and content of many suggest that their circulation was limited.

The rapid decline in printing at Kilkenny following the dissolution of the Confederation on the conclusion of peace in January 1649 also demonstrated that political print required a supportive political environment if it was to prosper. This was not something Ormond, who took up residence in the city soon after, was disposed to provide with the result that only four items were produced by his printer in 1649.<sup>41</sup> The Earl of Inchiquin was less inhibited, and his recognition that it was advantageous to him to explain his position in print as he distanced himself from the parliamentarians provided the stimulus for the commencement of printing at Cork in 1648–9. Inchiquin’s

<sup>39</sup> Micheál Ó Siochrú, *Confederate Ireland 1642–49: A Constitutional and Political Analysis* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), 183.

<sup>40</sup> For example, Walter Enos, *The Second Part of the Survey of the Articles of the Late Rejected Peace...* (Kilkenny and Waterford, n.d., ESTC R3649).

<sup>41</sup> Dix, ‘Printing in the City of Kilkenny’, 134–5.

disenchantment was prompted by the appointment of the unsympathetic Viscount Lisle as Lord Lieutenant in 1647, but the execution in January 1649 of Charles I was more crucial, and Inchiquin used the Cork press to explain his decision to join the Marquess of Ormond in recognizing Prince Charles as the new king.<sup>42</sup> The number of political titles produced at Cork at this time was small, but they attested to a strong commitment to monarchical government among the Protestants of Munster. This can be illustrated by reference to a number of works, but the publication of a Cork edition of *Eikon Basilike*, whose evocation of sacramental kingship was avidly consumed by distressed monarchists throughout Europe, is most noteworthy.<sup>43</sup>

The production of monarchical print at Cork was short-lived as, following the seizure by the Cromwellians of the city in October 1650, the Cork press followed the lead of Dublin, and produced republican texts. For a short period in the early 1650s, Ireland had three print centres—Dublin, Cork, and Waterford—but the instruction of the Commonwealth Council in September 1652 to the commissioners of the revenue to ‘secure the printing press belonging to the Commonwealth’ and, a month later, to seize ‘as many of the printed copies of *The Act of Settlement of Ireland* that are already printed at Waterford’ effectively signalled the end of printing there.<sup>44</sup> The determination, some time later, that nothing could be printed without the authorization of ‘the clerk of the council’ and that ‘anything tending to the prejudice of the commonwealth or the public peace and welfare’ had first to be sanctioned by the full Council concentrated publication once more in Dublin where it could most easily be regulated.<sup>45</sup> This signalled the end of an era in which political print had circulated with unprecedented, if not unlimited freedom. This was possible because the kingdom of Ireland was divided to all intents and purposes into discrete political entities. These were hardly optimal conditions for the growth of a vibrant print culture, but it is clear that the restoration of central government with the triumph of the Cromwellian army in 1649–51 disrupted developments that, on the admittedly slim basis of printer activity in Cork and Waterford in the early 1650s, might (had they been allowed to continue uninterrupted) have provided the basis for the development of a distinct regional print culture. It might even have led to the

<sup>42</sup> Patrick Little, ‘The Irish “Independents” and Viscount Lisle’s Lieutenancy of Ireland’, *Historical Journal*, 44 (2001), 941–2; *The Declaration of his Excellency the Lord Marquis of Ormond Lord Deputy of Ireland... Together with the Lord Inchiqueene... Concerning the Death of his Sacred Majesty who was Murdered at White-hall, the 30 of January* (Cork, 164[9], ESTC.R205966).

<sup>43</sup> *Eikon Basilike: the Pourtraicture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings* (Cork, 1649, Wing, E291); Barnard, ‘London Printing’, 7–8; Sessions, *The First Printers*, 95, 97.

<sup>44</sup> John Brady, ‘Government Printing in Waterford’, *Irish Book Lover*, 31 (1949), 12; Sessions, *The First Printers*, 22, 24.

<sup>45</sup> Pollard, ‘Control of the Press’, 84. Printing continued in Cork, but it was much reduced and essentially apolitical (E. R. McClintock Dix, ‘Printing in Cork in the Seventeenth Century’, *PRIA*, 30C (1912), 77–9).

genesis of a newspaper tradition, if the claims for the existence in Cork in 1649 of an embryonic newspaper—the *Irish Monthly Mercury*—committed to the idea that ‘the people should have news’ can be proven.<sup>46</sup>

## Restoration Government and Print

What transpired instead was a further era of governmental control. Significantly, this was less restrictive in practice than that prevailing in the early seventeenth century since, once the foundations of Cromwellian government were in place, the Dublin press operated by William Bladen was kept busy producing a menu of official documents relaying the decisions of the Irish executive and the English parliament on an augmented range of political and administrative matters. Proclamations were still the preferred print form, but acts of the English parliament, copies of speeches, and declarations were also made available.<sup>47</sup> The publication of radical religious literature likewise continued to possess political import, but the amount of print devoted to the advancement of ‘a real and thorough reformation’ produced in Dublin and Cork in the 1650s was modest.<sup>48</sup>

This reluctance to permit the open exchange of ideas is further evidenced by the fact that when the ‘Old Protestant’, Vincent Gookin, and the ‘New Protestant’, Richard Lawrence, took fundamentally different positions on the merits of relaxing the draconian scheme of ‘transplantation’ devised in the early 1650s, only one of the tracts (Lawrence’s *The Interest of England in the Irish Transplantation Stated*) was published in Dublin.<sup>49</sup> Although this can be accounted for in part by the fact that it was tactically advantageous to publish on this theme in London, it is equally significant that Gookin represented a strand of Protestant opinion that did not share the Commonwealth’s agenda, and that recognized the value of the printing press. As a result, when the disenchantment of the powerful ‘Old Protestants’ with radical experimentation encouraged them to promote the restoration of monarchical government following the death of Oliver Cromwell, they

<sup>46</sup> John Buckley, ‘The First Irish Newspaper: *The Irish Monthly Mercury*, Cork 1649’, *Journal of the Cork Archaeological and Historical Society*, 2nd series, 3 (1897), 137–8.

<sup>47</sup> Pollard, ‘Control of the Press in Ireland’, 82–3, 84; *A Declaration of the Lord Generall and his Councill of officers*... (Dublin, 1653, Wing, D702A); *An Act for Indemnifying of such Persons as have Acted for the Service* (Dublin, 1657, Wing, E1042AB). In addition, some official London print was transmitted to Dublin (Barnard, ‘London Publishing’, 13 n. 6).

<sup>48</sup> For examples, William Worth, *Scripture Evidence for Baptizing the Children of Covenanters* (Cork, 1653, Wing, 3618A); *An Agreement and Resolution of the Ministers of Christ Associated with the City of Dublin, and Province of Leinster, for Furthering of a Real and Thorough Reformation* (Dublin, 1659, Wing, A769).

<sup>49</sup> [Richard Lawrence], *The Interest of England in the Irish Transplantation Stated* (Dublin, 1655, ESTC R6890); T. C. Barnard, ‘Crises of Identity among Irish Protestants, 1641–1685’, *Past and Present*, 127 (1990), 58–70.

employed print adeptly to advance their case. Their most notable innovation was a newsbook, which was prepared 'to support as well as to report the momentous events' arising out of their decision to call an Irish Convention at Dublin in February 1660.<sup>50</sup> They also encouraged the publication of sympathetic sermons, supportive addresses, and the decisions (or ordinances) of the Convention, thus affirming their commitment to constructive government.<sup>51</sup> They profited, too, by the publication of a series of 'gracious' letters and declarations from Charles II that were issued with the specific purpose of appeasing critics and offering a positive image of the monarchy.<sup>52</sup>

Having come to appreciate the value of print in sustaining a positive impression of the King, the authorities continued to approve its production once Charles II was securely on the throne. To this end, they reinforced the familiar menu of official print with more specifically monarchical matter. The most widely circulated item was the 'gracious' speeches Charles II made before the Westminster legislature—22 examples of which were printed in Dublin editions between 1666 and 1679.<sup>53</sup> These were supplemented by 'declarations', 'letters', acts of parliament, and other statements on matters of current import, thereby ensuring not only that there was no ambiguity about the King's position on matters of current import but also that it was more widely disseminated than contrary viewpoints.<sup>54</sup> In addition, this object was pursued by the publication of royal statements on foreign affairs, most notably in respect of Anglo-Dutch relations during the late 1660s and early 1670s.<sup>55</sup> Parallel with this, priority was given also to the publication of sermons delivered on the anniversaries of the execution of Charles I (30 January), and the restoration of Charles II (29 May) over the more emotive outpourings preached each 23 October (the anniversary of the outbreak of the 1641 rising), though the promptitude with which the Lords Justices and Council had decreed in 1642 that 23 October should serve as an annual occasion of thanksgiving, and the ease with which it was given parliamentary sanction in 1662, suggests that this was the preferred commemorative occasion of Irish Protestants. The promotion of St George's day (23 April)

<sup>50</sup> Aidan Clarke, *Prelude to Restoration in Ireland: The End of the Commonwealth 1659–60* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 244–5.

<sup>51</sup> For examples, *Two Sermons . . . Preached at Christ-Church in the City of Dublin Before the General Convention of Ireland* (Dublin, 16[60], Wing, C6726); *An Ordinance for the Speedy Raising of Moneys for His Majesties Service* (Dublin 16[61], Wing, I426C).

<sup>52</sup> e.g., *His Majesties Gracious Declaration for the Settlement of his Kingdome of Ireland and Satisfaction of the Severall Interests of Adventurers Souldiers and Other his Subjects there* (Dublin, 1660, Wing, C3013).

<sup>53</sup> A typical title ran *His Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament* (Dublin, 1666, Wing C3141); see Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word*, nos. 1025–46 for a listing.

<sup>54</sup> For examples, *His Majesty's Declaration for Enforcing a Late Order Made in Council* (Dublin, 1674, Wing, 2965A); *An Act for Securing the Peace of the Kingdom* (Dublin, 1681, Wing, E1067A).

<sup>55</sup> For example, *A League of Union Betwixt His Majestie, and the Estates General of the United Provinces of the Low-Countreys* (Dublin, 1668, ESTC C3093).

and the anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot (5 November) provide further evidence of the authorities' determination to employ political print as a force for political stability.<sup>56</sup>

So too was the maintenance of a regime of print control, and the intentions of the Crown in this respect were made clear by the appointment for life of the London stationer, John Crooke, to the position of King's Printer. However, whereas this mechanism had proved highly effective in controlling the production of political print prior to 1641, it was less than entirely successful during the Restoration era, since even after the affirmation of Crooke's patent in 1663, Bladen's press remained operational.<sup>57</sup> The limits of this arrangement angered and disappointed those at the head of the Irish administration, who objected to the publication of the controversial efforts of Peter Walsh, the so-called 'procurator for the sec[ular] and reg[ular] Popish priests of Ireland', to promote Catholic toleration, and other Catholic literature.<sup>58</sup> Strong reservations were also expressed by the Duke of Ormond, the Lord Lieutenant, at the publication of the statement made by the speaker, Sir Audley Mervyn, in February 1662/3 in which he famously justified the unwillingness of MPs to acquiesce in the act of settlement certified by the Crown. Frustrated by his inability to prevent the circulation of 'senseless oratory', Ormond took some comfort from the fact that MPs were not opposed in principle to censorship, as they made clear when they instructed the sergeant-at-arms in May 1662 to take the bookseller Samuel Dancer into custody for breach of privilege for the unauthorized printing of Mervyn's speech.<sup>59</sup> This proved effective in so far as no further complaints of this kind were registered for 67 years, and as the ligature of censorship tightened in the following years, the overwhelming bulk of the political print that reached the public arena during the rest of the 1660s and 1670s served to affirm and to uphold both the image and authority of the existing regime and its policies.

This pattern might have persisted unaltered into the 1680s had the reverberations of the Popish Plot, which gripped English politics between

<sup>56</sup> T. C. Barnard, 'The Uses of 23 October 1641 and Irish Protestant Celebrations', *English Historical Review*, 106 (1991), 890–2; James Kelly, '“The Glorious and Immortal Memory”: Commemoration and Protestant Identity 1660–1800', *PRI*, 94C (1994), 27–8; *Proclamation of Lords Justices and Council*, 14 Oct. 1642 (Dublin, 1642, Wing, I849); John Bramhall, *A Sermon Preached at Dublin, upon the 23 of Aprill, 1661, Being the Day Appointed for his Majestie's Coronation* (Dublin, 1661, ESTC R25292); *A Sermon Preached at Christ-Church Dublin on the 30th of January 1670, being the Anniversary of the Murther of King Charles I* (Dublin, 1670, Wing, M66).

<sup>57</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 85–7.  
<sup>58</sup> [Peter Walsh], *A Letter Desiring a Just and Mercifull Regard of the Roman Catholics of Ireland* ([Dublin, 1662?], ESTC R186209); [Earl of Orrery], *The Answer of a Person of Quality to a Scandalous Letter Lately Printed and Subscribed by Peter Walsh*... (Dublin, 1662, ESTC R21915).

<sup>59</sup> Sir Audley Mervyn, *The Speech... Delivered to... James Duke of Ormond... the 13 day of February 1662*... (Dublin, 1662, ESTC R180562); Fergus O'Donoghue, 'Parliament in Ireland under Charles II', unpublished M.A. thesis, University College, Dublin 1970, 161–6; *Journal of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland, 1613–1800*, 19 vols. (Dublin, 1796–1800), i. 638.

1678 and 1681, not been keenly felt in Ireland. Given the apprehension of 'Popery' shared by the Protestant elite in both kingdoms, it was to be anticipated that the 'Plot' would register strongly in Ireland, but the sheer volume of print on the subject published in Dublin—amounting to over fifty titles—indicates that there were other forces at work. Since a majority of these titles were reprints of texts previously available in London, their appearance cannot be linked to the emergence of an indigenous culture of political discourse. Yet their publication in such numbers excited unease in official circles if the publication in Dublin in 1679 of Lord Chief Justice Scroggs' speech from the bench lamenting 'the many libellous pamphlets which are published against law to the scandal of . . . government and publick justice' is not misleading.<sup>60</sup> At very least, it indicated that the system of print regulation put in place in the 1660s was no longer effective. This is borne out by the fact that though Joseph Ray's attempt to overturn the official monopoly enjoyed by the Crooke family failed, it did not dissuade him from producing some twenty tracts and pamphlets—many relating to the Popish Plot—in 1681 alone.<sup>61</sup>

On a larger canvas, the fact that there was a market for this surge in political print attested to the emergence since the mid-seventeenth century of a literate Protestant audience that was both sufficiently politically aware and prosperous to sustain an expanded political print culture. Just how large the audience was at this time is uncertain, but since nearly 75 per cent of the population of Dublin, which is estimated at 45,000 in the mid-1680s, was anglophone, it was potentially substantial. Moreover, evidence dating from September 1651 to the effect that the Westminster parliament ordered the transmission to Dublin of one thousand copies each of 'the narratives of the battle of Worcester and the acts thereupon for a day of thanksgiving' suggests that it was capable of large-scale consumption.<sup>62</sup> The print runs of the pamphlets and tracts published at the time of the Popish Plot were probably smaller, but the number of 'tryals', 'true accounts', 'narratives', 'declarations', 'last speeches', 'examinations', and other texts relating to the 'Popish Plot' printed in Dublin could not have occurred if there were not sufficient consumers of print to sustain it.

There was, of course, an identifiable Irish dimension to the 'Plot'<sup>63</sup> that was bound to appeal to readers in Ireland. However, this is of lesser significance in explaining the surge in print that took place than the fact that the expanding

<sup>60</sup> *Lord Chief Justice Scroggs, his Speech in the King's Bench the First Day of this Present Michaelmas Term* (Dublin, 1679, ESTC R23609).

<sup>61</sup> Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 88–90.

<sup>62</sup> Barnard, 'London publishing', 13 n. 16, citing *Cal. S.P. Domestic, 1651*, 456.

<sup>63</sup> As manifest in such titles as *The Tryal and Condemnation of Dr Oliver Plunkett, Titular Primate of Ireland for High Treason . . .* (Dublin, 1681, ESTC R25660); *An Account of the Publick Affairs in Ireland Since the Discovery of the Late Plot* (Dublin, [1679], Wing, A376A).

culture of political print mirrored that of England so closely that one could justifiably define it in provincial terms. However, to do so would be to offer a misleadingly subordinate impression of its organization and character and, while acknowledging that members of the ‘Protestant interest’ in Ireland continued to deem themselves English, to accord insufficient weight to the impact their residence in Ireland had on their outlook. It is more appropriate for this reason to characterize the popular political print culture that this represented, and that endured until the 1720s, as Anglo-Irish rather than Irish or as a provincial subset of the larger and more powerful English culture.

This was confirmed in the early 1680s, for though the authorities wished otherwise, and approved the publication of a familiar menu of royal ‘speeches’, declarations, and flattering ‘narratives’,<sup>64</sup> readers could now choose from an enhanced menu of political tracts of Irish as well as English origin. The availability of pamphlets, poems, satires, speeches, and debates prompted by the Exclusion Crisis, the Rye Houseplot, and other plots indicated the strength of interest in English affairs.<sup>65</sup> This was manifested still more graphically by the publication of rival editions by Mary Crooke and Joseph Ray of Algernon Sydney’s ‘last speech’.<sup>66</sup> The amount of indigenous Irish print was modest by contrast, but it was possible in the early 1680s to purchase accounts of the ‘downfall’ of Redmond O’Hanlon, the notorious Tory, both parts of Richard Lawrence’s *The Interest of Ireland*, a sequence of publications in support of the admission of Huguenot refugees, and assertive anti-Popery polemic.<sup>67</sup>

The expanding culture of political print of which these were the main features, and which was a consequence in turn of the spread of literacy, greater wealth, and the appreciating political consciousness of the Protestant interest in Ireland, was not sufficiently strongly embedded to thrive independently, since it continued to be disrupted by the volatility of the political world as well as by the ongoing official commitment to censorship. This was demonstrated in 1686 when the then Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Clarendon, sought by ‘Order of Council to forbid the printing of any books or pamphlets

<sup>64</sup> For example, *His Majesties Declaration to all his Loving Subjects Touching the Causes and Reasons that Moved him to Dissolve the Last two Parliaments* (Dublin, 1681, Wing, C3001A).

<sup>65</sup> For example, *The Debates in the House of Commons assembled at Oxford the Twenty First of March, 1680* (Dublin, 1681, Wing, E2546A); *The Arraignment, Tryal and Condemnation of Algernon Sydney* (Dublin, 1684, Wing, A3754A).

<sup>66</sup> Algernon Sidney, *The Very Copy of a Paper Delivered to the Sheriffs upon the Scaffold on Tower Hill on Friday December the 7th* (Dublin, 1683, ESTC R184247); Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word*, no. 4718.

<sup>67</sup> *Count O’Hanlon’s Downfall, or a True and Exact Account of the Killing* (Dublin, 1681) (Wing, C6517); Richard Lawrence, *The Interest of Ireland in its Trade and Wealth Stated*, 2 parts (Dublin, 1682, ESTC R11185); *The Humble Petition of the Protestants of France* ([Dublin, 1681], Wing, H3576A); Robert Ware, *Foxes and Firebrands: or a Specimen of the Danger and Harmony of Popery and Separation...* (Dublin, 1682, Wing, W847B).

whatsoever without licence from the proper persons'.<sup>68</sup> The full implications of this for the world of print took some time to percolate, as James II and Clarendon were anxious to do nothing that would alienate the already nervous Protestant interest. It is thus significant that the publication of texts supportive of religious toleration, and critical of the attempt to exclude James II from the throne published prior to his accession, did not herald a wave of commentaries endorsing his controversial Catholic convictions.<sup>69</sup> Instead, readers were supplied during the early years of the reign with a familiar diet of official print designed to keep the monarch's profile high, and politico-religious tracts whose purpose was to underline the centrality of the Church of Ireland in the constitution and to affirm the legitimacy of its theology over that of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>70</sup> More topical political matters were not ignored and, depending on inclination, one could read about international issues, such as the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, or British issues, such as the trial of Titus Oates, the Monmouth rebellion, and James II's problems in Scotland.<sup>71</sup> Saliently, domestic Irish politics continued to elicit less notice, and even James II's decision to entrust the direction of Irish affairs to the more forceful Earl of Tyrconnell made little difference. The subsequent enhancement of the position of Catholics and Roman Catholicism was reflected in a number of publications,<sup>72</sup> but it took the deposition of James II in 1688 to stimulate the production of Jacobite political literature. The appointment of William Weston to act as 'printer and stationer' to Tyrconnell indicates that the Jacobites were not unaware of the potential value of print to their cause. Yet, the strikingly small quantity produced at their behest during the crucial years, 1688–90, suggests that, had they emerged victorious in the struggle with William of Orange and the forces of British and Irish Protestantism, they would not have permitted an active political print culture.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Cited in Pollard, 'Control of the Press', 91.

<sup>69</sup> George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, *A Short Discourse Upon the Reasonableness of Men's Having a Religion* ([Dublin], 1685, Wing, B5329B); [Sir Roger L'Estrange], *The Observator's Observations Upon the Bill of Exclusion* (Dublin, 1685, ESTC R224152).

<sup>70</sup> For example, Bishop Francis Turner, *A Sermon Preached Before their Majesties K[ing] James II and Q[ueen] Mary at their Coronation in Westminster-Abby, April 23* (Dublin, 1685, ESTC R230490); Bishop William Sheridan, *Catholic Religion Asserted by St Paul, and Maintained in the Church of England; in Opposition to the Errors in the Church of Rome* (Dublin, 1687, ESTC R184082).

<sup>71</sup> [Jean Claude], *An Account of the Persecutions and Oppressions of the Protestants in France* (Dublin, 1686, Wing, C4590); *A True Narrative of the Tryal of Titus Oates* (Dublin, 1685, ESTC R232387); *A True and Perfect Account of the Taking of James Late Duke of Monmouth* (Dublin, 1685, Wing, T2523); *An Account of the Proceedings of His Majesties Army in Scotland . . .* (Dublin, 1685, Wing, A368).

<sup>72</sup> For example, John Everard, *A Winding-Sheet for the Schism of England, Contriv'd for to Inform the Ignorant, Resolve the Wavering, and Confirm the Well Principled Roman Catholick* (Dublin, 1687, ESTC R218299).

<sup>73</sup> For example, *His Majesties Most Gracious Speech to Both Houses of Parliament on the 7th of May* (Dublin, 1689, Wing, J232).



## Print in Williamite Ireland

By comparison, William of Orange was permissive, and one important consequence of his triumph over James II was an observable increase in the production and circulation of political print that was a necessary precondition for the generation of a lively print culture. An early indicator that this might be the case was provided by William of Orange's decision to bring a printing press with him to Ireland, and by his engagement of Edward Jones, appointed King's Printer in England in 1689, to publish proclamations and other notices vital to the conduct of the war in Ireland.<sup>74</sup> A further pointer, also offered during the course of hostilities, was provided by the publication of accounts of incidents that took place during the Jacobite War.<sup>75</sup>

The war over, the new regime appealed without hesitation to print to assist in generating support and trust in William of Orange.<sup>76</sup> This echoed the monarchist propaganda inaugurated during the Restoration and continued during the reign of James II, while in a similar display of continuity with the past, a wave of sermons poured off the printing presses affirming the political as well as the theological perspective of the Church of Ireland. A still clearer illustration of the symbiotic partnership of church and state is provided by the publication of the annual 23 October sermons preached before Lords Lieutenant, Lords Justices, MPs, and peers. Moreover, the sternly Protestant vision enunciated then was reinforced on a range of other occasions at which thanks was given for 'the preservation of His Majesty's person' and gratitude expressed to God that He had not alone secured Irish Protestants from destruction at the hands of 'perfidious' Catholics but enabled them to enjoy the blessings of a Protestant constitution.<sup>77</sup>

The strength of feeling within the Church of Ireland to which these and a plethora of other sermons, lectures, charges, and admonitions—many but not all produced at the behest of societies for the reformation of manners—attest was manifest also in the confidence and conviction with which clerical champions rose to the defence of their communion against dissent.<sup>78</sup> Among

<sup>74</sup> For Jones' activities see W. K. Sessions, *Further Irish Studies in Early Printing History* (York: Sessions, 1994), 25, 28–33; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 321–2.

<sup>75</sup> For example, *An Exact and Particular Account of the Defeat Given to the Rebels in the County of Cork* (Dublin, 1691, Wing, E3601).

<sup>76</sup> For example, *An Ode on the Anniversary of the Coronation of King William and Queen Mary* (Dublin, 1693, Wing, H8).

<sup>77</sup> For example, Edward Wetenhall, *A Sermon Preached Octob[er] 23, 1692 Before his Excellency the L[ord] Lieutenant and the Lords Spiritual and Temporal...* (Dublin, 1692, Wing, W1518); Barnard, 'The Uses of 23 October', 894–8.

<sup>78</sup> T. C. Barnard, 'Reforming Irish Manners: The Religious Societies in Dublin during the 1690s', *Historical Journal*, 35 (1992), 805–38; Edward Wetenhall, *Pastoral Admonitions Directed by the Bishop of Cork to all Under his Charge* (Dublin, 1691, ESTC R38579).

those to the fore were ecclesiastics such as Bishop William King of Derry, whose seminal *The State of the Protestants of Ireland* . . . , published in London but available in Ireland, provided uneasy members of that communion with a persuasive political justification for forsaking James II. King also sustained a long exchange in the mid-1690s with Joseph Boyse on the legitimacy of dissent, and he was supported by fellow bishops—Tobias Pullen, Anthony Dopping, and Edward Synge.<sup>79</sup> Others who felt the weight of ecclesiastical disapproval were William Penn, whose defence of the Society of Friends brought him into conflict with Bishop Wetenhall of Cork, and John Toland, who was taken severely to task by Peter Browne, then a senior fellow at Trinity College.<sup>80</sup> Since these exchanges were open-ended by definition, the most crucial matter in respect of the manner in which they were conducted was the availability of Dublin imprints of the main works. This was not invariably the case; John Toland's infamous *Christianity not Mysterious* was not published in Ireland. However, the thoughts of Joseph Boyse, William Penn, and other controversial spokesmen were readily procurable.

The expanding realm of public debate to which this attests was replicated in the narrower domain of government where, as well as the familiar menu of proclamations, acts of Parliament, and King's speeches relaying the decisions, administrative and political, of the institutions of government, there was a striking expansion in the publication of a diversity of political opinions.<sup>81</sup> The fact that the Irish parliament met with greater regularity was crucial, for as well as providing the occasion for the production of official documents,<sup>82</sup> it stimulated political debate. The 1690s witnessed a more open exchange of political ideas, for in addition to the expected commentaries on the Treaty of Limerick, the activities of the Jacobite Court at St Germain, and French mal-intent,<sup>83</sup> there was a broad and serendipitous range of other matter. Much of this appertained to individuals, but concerns expressed in respect of the distribution of the estates forfeited by Jacobites, and the implications of major events abroad are also indicative of an expanding political

<sup>79</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Print and Protestant Identity: William King's Pamphlet Wars, 1687–97', in Vincent Carey and Ute Lotz-Heumann (eds.), *Taking Sides?: Colonial and Confessional Mentalities in Early Modern Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 231–50; William King, *The State of the Protestants in Ireland Under the Late King James* . . . (London, 1691, ESTC R18475).

<sup>80</sup> Edward Wetenhall, *A Brief and Modest Reply to Mr Penn's Tedious, Scurrilous and Unchristian Defence Against the Bishop of Cork* (Dublin, 1699, ESTC R38532); Peter Browne, *A Letter in Answer to a Book Entitled Christianity not Mysterious* (Dublin, 1697, ESTC R19095).

<sup>81</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word*, nos. 1714–17, 2492–5, 4136–82, 5658–62.

<sup>82</sup> For example, *A True and Compleat List of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal Together with the Knights Citizens and Burgesses* . . . (Dublin, 1692, Wing, T2426).

<sup>83</sup> William Lloyd, *The Pretences of the French Invasion Examined* . . . (Dublin, 1692, ESTC R216713); *The Articles of Limerick Ratified* ([Dublin, 1700?], Wing, A3860B); *The Late King James's Manifesto Answered Paragraph by Paragraph* . . . (Dublin, 1697, ESTC R216149); *Some Account of the Divisions at the Court of St Germans* . . . (Dublin, 1694, ESTC R184360).

sensibility.<sup>84</sup> The most revealing publications arguably were those appertaining to economic concerns, because this was a subject of debate that was open-ended by its very nature. This was still more likely, of course, when it generated political controversy or if it provided the stimulus for political demands. Such publications as were produced in Ireland in the late 1690s in support of establishing a bank or addressing the lamentable state of coin fit this category, but they excited only a fraction of the interest generated by concern for the kingdom's woollen manufacture in the late 1690s.<sup>85</sup> This was so because the alarm that gripped the political nation in Ireland in respect of this commodity was fuelled by the perception that the prohibition on exports favoured by the Westminster legislature was fundamentally unjust. It was this perception essentially that prompted William Molyneux in 1698 to produce his seminal statement in support of the right of Irish Protestants to enjoy the same rights as Englishmen. Significantly, the stir caused by Molyneux's intervention was stronger in Britain than in Ireland. At the same time, the fact that the controversial thoughts of authors as diverse as Molyneux, Sir Richard Coxe, and John Hovell were published in Dublin at all exhibits that the culture of political print in Ireland at the end of the seventeenth century was far removed from the tightly corralled, narrow world of a century earlier.<sup>86</sup>

## Print and Political Culture

The years 1550–1700 constitute an important phase in the emergence of a public sphere in Ireland, since it was then that the foundations of the vibrant print culture that came of age in the eighteenth century were put in place. Moreover, this was achieved despite tight state regulation, which discouraged the expression in print of views that did not have official favour. Regulation was at its most effective in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries when the only political print issued in Ireland was officially sanctioned. This was possible because the sole printing press in the kingdom was under state

<sup>84</sup> For example, *Some Observations or Remarks upon the Paper Brought into the House of Commons* ([Dublin], 1695, Wing S4537A); *An Abstract of the Irish Bill Concerning the Forfeited Estates* (Dublin, 1700, Wing, A135A); *Articles of Peace Between Prince William III... and Lewis XIV... in the Royal Palace of Ryswick* (Dublin, 1697, Wing, W2311).

<sup>85</sup> Richard Holt, *Seasonable Proposals for a Perpetual Fund or Bank in Dublin* ([Dublin, 1696], ESTC R233581); *The Case of the Coin Fairly Represented...* ([Dublin, 1697], Wing, M10).

<sup>86</sup> William Molyneux, *The Case of Ireland's Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England Stated* (Dublin, 1698, ESTC R32102); Sir Richard Coxe, *Some Thoughts on the Bill Depending Before... the House of Lords, for Prohibiting the Exportation of the Woollen Manufactures of Ireland to Foreign Parts* (Dublin, 1698, Wing, C6725); [John Hovell], *A Discourse on the Woollen Manufactury of Ireland and the Consequences of Prohibiting its Exportation* (Dublin, 1698, ESTC R24081).

control, and it proved impossible to sustain. A turning point was reached in the 1640s when the rival parties contending for political ascendancy each sought to employ the printing press to advance their views. The modest amount of print issued is indicative both of the underdevelopment of the print culture in Ireland at that time and of the suspicion with which it continued to be regarded by those in power. As a result, it is a matter of no surprise that the Commonwealth and the restored Stuart monarchy aspired to restore the controls that had proved effective in the early seventeenth century. They were only partly successful, not least because the state's requirements precluded any return to the quiet world of print that then prevailed. In addition, individuals as well as interests had learned the lesson of the propaganda battles fought during the 1640s: print was a most effective way to communicate political views and opinions. They had learned it so well indeed that rather than accede to the restraints put in place, some Irish authors availed of their proximity to London to have their work produced by English printers. The amount of English print of this nature circulating in Ireland was probably small given the restrictive environment that also obtained in England,<sup>87</sup> but when taken in tandem with the permeability of the King's Printer monopoly, the rising demand (so evident at the time of the 'Popish Plot'), and the dramatic shifts in the political disposition of the executive, it was inevitable that print grew rapidly as a medium of political communication from the 1660s. These developments, notwithstanding, the willingness of the victorious Williamite regime to relax the existing restrictions was crucial to the emergence of a vibrant political print culture, since, without it, the improvements in technology, literacy, and distribution also taking place must have had a muted impact. Indeed, it is the synergistic interaction of this combination of forces that makes the 1690s a significant moment in the emergence of a culture of political print in Ireland. As well as the availability of print in previously unanticipated quantity, the evidence for this is to be seen in the phenomena of the book auction and the book catalogue,<sup>88</sup> in the presence in Dublin in 1698 of 23 booksellers,<sup>89</sup> in the creation of diocesan libraries, and in the development of the private library as a distinct physical space with its own furniture and accoutrements.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>87</sup> These are conveniently summarized in John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* (London: Longmans, 2000), 129–31.

<sup>88</sup> For example, John Ware, *A Catalogue of Books in Several Faculties and Languages . . . to be Sold by way of Auction at Dick's Coffee House in Skinner Row* (Dublin, 1699, ESTC R173008).

<sup>89</sup> John Dunton, *The Dublin Scuffle*, ed. Andrew Carpenter (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 339.

<sup>90</sup> Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland*, 71; Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 55–6; James Raven, 'New Reading Histories, Print Culture and the Identification of Change', *Social History*, 23 (1998), 284–5; Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, 184; T. C. Barnard, 'Learning, the Learned and Literacy in Ireland, 1650–1760', in T. C. Barnard, Daibhí Ó Cróinín, and Katharine Simms (eds.), *A Miracle of Learning: Studies in Irish Manuscripts and Learning. Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 210, 213–16.

These achievements notwithstanding, compared with its English equivalent, the small amount of print published outside Dublin and the heavy reliance on reprints indicated that the culture of political print in Ireland at the end of the seventeenth century was still at an adolescent stage; it was to grow and mature in the eighteenth century.

# Political Publishing, 1700–1800

*James Kelly*

Ireland's 'print culture' expanded at an accelerated pace in the eighteenth century. This was possible because the foundations previously laid proved enduring, but it could not have taken place in the absence of technological development, improvements in the level of literacy, enhanced systems of distribution, and greater political awareness and 'self-consciousness'.<sup>1</sup> The relaxation of the King's Printer monopoly was also significant, though this did not confer the right to freedom of expression. The parameters of permissible print were defined by what the dominant Protestant interest was prepared to allow, but since their anglophone public sphere grew in the course of the eighteenth century, it left considerable scope for the presentation and exchange of political opinions. The 1720s were formative, because it was then that the Anglo-Irish culture of political print forged at the time of the Popish Plot yielded to a culture that was manifestly Irish. This developed slowly, but a sequence of political crises during the 1740s and 1750s, and the establishment during the 1760s of an overtly political press, not only ensured that the newspaper emulated the pamphlet as the key medium for the exchange and promotion of political ideas and opinions, it also sustained an active culture of political debate. This remained the situation until the 1790s, when the United Irishmen employed all three forms—the pamphlet, newspaper, and the revitalized broadside—in the most intense attempt at mass politicization yet attempted. They did so to some effect, but their failure to accomplish their revolutionary agenda ensured that the animated debate on an Anglo-Irish legislative union with which the eighteenth century concluded took a traditional form.

<sup>1</sup> T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture: Old Regime Europe 1660–1789* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 132; Roger Chartier, *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge and Oxford: Polity Press and Basil Blackwell, 1989).

## Types of Political Print

As the most popular medium of political communication, the broadside proclamation was emblematic of political print during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This observation is sustained not only by the proclamation's ubiquity, but also by its rudimentary form, which mirrored the state of print technology, as well as reading patterns. Little can be ventured with confidence as to how the public engaged with the proclamation, but the fact that they were produced in editions of five hundred or less combined with their linguistic and stylistic remoteness (many employed Gothic fonts) suggests that they were subject to intensive reading.<sup>2</sup> The comparable layout of printed acts of Parliament and of a high proportion of pamphlets reinforces the impression, conveyed by Lord Chesterfield's tantalizing observation that 'folios are the people of business', that proclamations and other folio texts demanded, and were afforded, close and attentive scrutiny. Assuming this is correct, and that Chesterfield's further remarks that 'quartos are the easier mixed company with whom I sit after dinner' and 'small octavos and duodecimos' the conversational equivalent of 'light and often frivolous chit-chat' are equally valid, the implication that the emergence of texts of these sizes encouraged a different style of engagement in the eighteenth century is inescapable.<sup>3</sup> It is improbable at the same time that all readers engaged with all texts in the same manner. This is consistent with John Brewer's argument that rather than the 'extensive' reading style, proposed by Engelsing, the greater availability of print encouraged 'more varied reading'.<sup>4</sup>

This is all the more likely in the Irish case because the volume of political print grew fitfully, and because the main genres used to convey political information—broadside, pamphlet, and newspaper—differed in form, and were subject to periodic redesign. Equally significantly, their relative importance as conveyors of political print altered. This is striking in the case of the broadside, which continued, in the familiar form of the proclamation, to serve as a favoured medium of central government, though the regular assembly of the Irish legislature and the development of new administrative structures post-1692 created other options, and it became increasingly a peripheral feature of the culture of political print. Paradoxically, the readership of proclamations may have expanded, since their publication in

<sup>2</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica*, 29 (1995–7), 46–7.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Chartier, 'Texts, Printings, Readings', in Lynn Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 168.

<sup>4</sup> See Robert Darnton, 'History of Reading', in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 148–9; John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Longmans, 1997), 168–71.

government-supported newspapers improved the circulation of their content. This notwithstanding, the marginalization of the broadside was symbolized by its employment by 'Grub Street' printers in the early eighteenth century to convey sensational news stories, of which crime and trial reports, last speeches, and elegies are the most distinctive.<sup>5</sup> The broadside survived as a feature of the culture of political print into the 1730s, but (proclamations apart) its confinement between then and the 1790s to the publication of specialized forms such as division lists was indicative of its diminished status.

The space vacated by the broadside was filled by the pamphlet, which consolidated its position—already established by the 1690s—as the primary medium of political debate in the first half of the eighteenth century. This was encouraged by changes in taste and in production, as a result of which the quarto and the folio (favoured in the seventeenth century) had given way to the octavo and duodecimo by the mid-1710s. Since texts of these sizes were not esteemed, they were offered for sale in a rude, inelegant format. Typically presented roughly sewn, with uncut pages and untrimmed edgings, covered in coarse blue paper or plain board, they were not purchased for retention, and this was reflected in their price. During the first half of the eighteenth century, pamphlets printed in Dublin could be purchased for 1 or 2 pence. Prices rose thereafter, but it was still possible in the second half of the eighteenth century to buy short tracts for 3d, standard-sized tracts for 6½d, and longer works for 1s 1d.<sup>6</sup>

These prices put the cost of many pamphlets within the reach of a substantial proportion of the literate anglophone population, and the willingness of political interests to distribute pamphlets *gratis* or at a subsidized rate made them still more accessible.<sup>7</sup> This was facilitated further by advances in respect of the size and style of font employed and general layout, although one cannot claim that reading these products was invariably easier. The 1719 and 1725 editions of William Molyneux's *Case of Ireland*, which were printed in small type with marginal citations in duodecimo, and Charles Lucas's tightly packed lucubrations, which were published in octavo in 1751, remained a challenge for even accomplished readers.<sup>8</sup> However, the trend was firmly in the direction of employing more uniform fonts and more generous spacing.

<sup>5</sup> James Kelly, *Gallows Speeches from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001) offers an introduction to one element of this genre.

<sup>6</sup> The prices cited are taken from individual pamphlets and Stephen Small, *Political Thought in Ireland, 1776–1798* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11.

<sup>7</sup> Bob Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 210, 213; James Kelly, *Prelude to Union: Anglo-Irish Politics in the 1780s* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1985), 163; Penelope Woods, 'The Pamphlets Considered', in Agnes Neligan (ed.), *Maynooth Library Treasures* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1995), 148.

<sup>8</sup> William Molyneux, *The Case of Ireland Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated* (Dublin, 1719, 1720, ESTC T97124, N26763); Charles Lucas, *The Political Constitutions of Great Britain and Ireland Asserted and Vindicated* . . . (London, 1751, ESTC T78776).



Such enhancements were important in attracting readers since pamphlets were not esteemed in the early eighteenth century. Archbishop Narcissus Marsh, for example, observed disparagingly that those who described themselves as booksellers in Dublin could more correctly ‘be called sellers of pamphlets’, and it is indicative that they possessed little appeal for collectors such as the second Duke of Ormonde, Archbishop William King, and St Canice’s Cathedral.<sup>9</sup> Edward Worth MD (1678–1732) is an exception; as well as an unrivalled medical and classical library, he assembled an impressive collection of contemporary British and Irish political titles that echoed the Anglo-Irish character of the culture of political print.<sup>10</sup> This was mirrored by the press, which, following an uninspiring early phase, came in the mid-eighteenth century to rival the pamphlet as the main forum for the dissemination of political ideas and to surpass it in relaying information.

Newspaper publication in Ireland commenced in earnest during Queen Anne’s reign, when thirty-seven titles were inaugurated. Most were short-lived, but the fact that the number of titles produced increased from nine in 1701–5 to twenty-nine in 1726–30, before settling in the mid-teens where it remained until the 1760s, was not without political significance.<sup>11</sup> Yet because the bulk of the news carried in Irish newspapers in the early eighteenth century appertained to foreign rather than to domestic affairs, present-day readers are predisposed to conclude that contemporaries must have found them apolitical, when this was not the case. ‘The main purpose of the Irish newspaper, until well into the 1720’s [sic], was to furnish . . . the latest news of political happenings, not in Ireland, but in England and the continent.’<sup>12</sup> Information on Irish events was secured in other ways: hot political news was relayed orally in taverns, coffee houses, drawing rooms, and other meeting places; parliamentary intelligence was communicated by letter as well as by the votes and other authorized publications; while accounts of crimes, trials, executions, and funerals could be obtained in more satisfying detail from broadsides. This is why early-eighteenth-century Irish newspaper proprietors were so dependent for copy on ‘the arrival of the British packet’ with the London papers; why, despite the discouragingly high postal charges, there was a significant level of subscription to English titles; and why publishers gave precedence to foreign news over paying advertisements or issued news supplements rather than allow a rival to take the credit of being first with a story.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Mary Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984), 71; Gillespie, ‘The Circulation of Print’, 42, 55–6; PRO, FEC 1/877 (Ormond library list).

<sup>10</sup> James Kelly, *Sir Edward Nemenham MP* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 25–9.

<sup>11</sup> Robert Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper 1685–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), 6–14, 132; Kelly, *Gallows Speeches*, 23–4.

<sup>12</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 116.

<sup>13</sup> Máire Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001), 7; Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 93–6; *Dublin Intelligence*, 18 July 1702; *Dublin Gazette*, 23 Sept. 1712, 21 Mar. 1713.

Despite the intense competition for readers to which this attests, early-eighteenth-century Irish newspapers were, and remained, unsophisticated artefacts. Employing the minimum of internal signposting and little variation in font size, the negotiation of the dense blocks of print set in tight columns was not for the unskilled. However, because the contents of each newspaper followed a distinctive format, an experienced reader could manoeuvre his/her way with relative ease and, based on the sharp increase in the number of newspapers produced, one must conclude that they met the expectations of the expanding audience identified by Munter.<sup>14</sup> Saliently, it was not until the emergence in the 1720s of an identifiably Irish culture of political print that they carried Irish news in any volume. Moreover, the increased space allocated to domestic affairs was not at the expense of foreign news, and it was still possible for consumers of political print in the 1790s to follow closely events in the courts and on the battlefields of Europe through the news press.<sup>15</sup>

The expanding culture of political print that developed around the broadside, pamphlet, and newspaper was also dependent on crucial social and organizational developments. Of these, the growth in popular literacy was perhaps the most important. This is a difficult area, but based on the evidence available from settler communities in counties as far apart as Down, Kerry, Waterford, and Dublin that suggests that the ability to write (a skill usually acquired after reading) was of the order of 80 per cent, there are grounds for suggesting that the acceleration in literacy that took place in England between the 1670s and 1720s also occurred among the Protestant interest in Ireland, and that literacy rates may have approached the higher levels identified for some sectors and some parts of England. Rates were certainly high enough in the early eighteenth century among 'the middling sort', which in rural areas embraced leaseholders and in urban areas 'petty functionaries, skilled craft-workers and modest traders', for publishers in the late 1710s and 1720s to produce newspapers targeted at them.<sup>16</sup>

This would not have been possible without significant technological and commercial innovation. The presence in Dublin in 1700 of six or seven presses was sufficient to maintain print at its 1690s level until about 1707–8 when the surge commenced that was to see the number of printers quadruple by the late 1720s. This growth could not be sustained, but the number of

<sup>14</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 132.

<sup>15</sup> Newenham to Miles, 11 Jan., 1 Feb., 19 July, 5 Oct. 1794, in C. P. Miles (ed.), *The Correspondence of William Augustus Miles on the French Revolution*, 2 vols. (London, 1890), ii. 131–3, 148–51, 184–6, 196–7.

<sup>16</sup> Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print', 32–3; T. C. Barnard, 'Learning, the Learned and Literacy in Ireland, 1650–1760', in T. C. Barnard, Daibhi Ó Cróinín, and Katharine Simms (eds.), *A Miracle of Learning: Studies in Irish Manuscripts and Learning. Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 219–20; Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, 167–8; Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 113–14, 133–4, 153.

printers and, by implication, printing presses in the city during the difficult years of the 1730s and early 1740s did not fall below twenty, following which the print sector embarked on a sustained phase of expansion lasting into the 1790s.<sup>17</sup> This was aided by the emergence of a retail infrastructure of commensurate scale and flexibility. Bookshops were the obvious outlet for pamphlets and allied ‘new trifles’, and the development of the practice whereby booksellers commissioned printers to produce editions of particular texts on their behalf offers the clearest indication of their importance as publishers as well as retailers.<sup>18</sup> However, since most political print possessed a short shelf-life, publishers and publisher-booksellers were obliged to recruit hawkers or newsboys, packmen and peddlers to bring their texts to readers, and they were so successful it was observed in the early 1730s that ‘every man almost who wears a good coat to his back’ found ‘pamphlets and flying papers constantly thrust into [his] hands’.<sup>19</sup> This is an obvious exaggeration, but the fact that, rather than sell them at <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>d, hawkers in the late 1720s hired out newspapers at ‘a halfpenny a read’ illustrates that demand was strong. Those eager to sample from a larger menu of newspapers and, to a lesser degree, of pamphlets could frequent one of the many coffee houses, whose existence is no less indicative of the expanding public sphere. Thus in 1706, Dickson’s of Winetavern Street made available a ‘variety of foreign and domestick news, viz: Paris and London Gazetteers, Leyden Gazette and Slip, Paris and Hague *letters à la main*, Daily Courants, Postman, Flying Post and Postscript, Manuscripts etc.’. Those who preferred to read in the privacy of their own home could, for the princely sum of ten shillings a year, have a newspaper ‘sent’ direct to their place of residence.<sup>20</sup>

The commercialization of the world of print as well as of the greater political awareness and personal consciousness to which these developments bear witness paved the way in turn for the emergence of the independent author.<sup>21</sup> This was an uncomplicated process in Ireland since there were no obvious rival patronage networks such as existed in other European countries. Moreover, the state’s print requirements were, and remained, modest, with the result that though the emergence of the independent political commentator can be linked to the increase in the number of titles published in the 1720s, the world of print was hardly large enough to sustain the political writer as a distinct feature of the literary landscape. The trend towards more frank political commentary and the more open avowal

<sup>17</sup> J. W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin 1670–1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 38.

<sup>18</sup> Gillespie, ‘Circulation of Print’, 42; *A Catalogue of the Bradshaw Collection of Irish Books in the University Library Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1916).

<sup>19</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 79–80; Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 54–8.

<sup>20</sup> *Flying Post*, 6 July 1708; *Dublin Gazette*, 10, 20 June 1724, 4 Jan. 1732.

<sup>21</sup> James Raven, ‘New Reading Histories, Print Culture and the Identification of Change: The Case of Eighteenth-Century England’, *Social History*, 23 (1998), 285; Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, 161–3.

of authorship that was increasingly a part of print culture in the second half of the eighteenth century could not be interrupted, however, because the relaxation in the state control of print, allied to the confinement of the monopoly of the King's Printer, the failure to extend the Westminster Copyright Act (1709), and the absence of taxes, meant that the environment in which authors, printers, and publishers operated in Ireland was less constrained than in most other European jurisdictions for most of the eighteenth century.<sup>22</sup> Yet, authors and publishers were not free to write and publish what they pleased, because the Irish authorities followed the example of their British equivalents and appealed readily to the laws against blasphemy, obscenity, seditious libel, and the privilege of Parliament to interdict objectionable matter. The number of actions taken was not especially large. Munter has computed that there were a total of 'fifty-nine' prosecutions between 1685 and 1760, of which thirty-two were 'against printers readily identifiable as having Tory sympathies'. However, this statistic obscures the more compelling fact that the authorities' intervention impeded the open expression of political and religious views—Jacobite, Roman Catholic, and, on a lesser scale, Tory—inconsistent with the 'Protestant constitution in church and state'.<sup>23</sup>

## Print and Practical Politics to 1750

Although this environment ensured that the overwhelming bulk of political print produced in Ireland in the eighteenth century was confined within the ideological parameters set by the Protestant interest, it did permit the development of a vigorous culture of political print within that sphere. This was not obvious in the first decade of the century, as the output of the Dublin printers, who were responsible for 92 per cent of the total output of Irish print in the eighteenth century, differed little from that of the 1690s.<sup>24</sup> It is not possible to state accurately what proportion of the eight hundred plus titles produced between 1701 and 1710 was political, but the large number of English and Scottish reprints and the comparatively small number to address domestic themes was consistent with the Anglo-Irish character of the culture of print.<sup>25</sup> This assessment is reinforced by the

<sup>22</sup> Mary Pollard, 'Control of the Press in Ireland through the King's Printer's Patent 1600–1800', *Irish Booklore*, 3 (1964), 92–3; Brewer, *Pleasures of the Imagination*, 131–3.

<sup>23</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 103–4.

<sup>24</sup> Woods, 'The Pamphlets Considered', 159–60; F. J. G. Robinson, J. M. Robinson, and C. Wadham, *Eighteenth-Century British Books: An Index to the Foreign and Provincial Imprints* (Newcastle, 1982).

<sup>25</sup> Figures calculated from ESTC; *Articles of the Treaty of Union Agreed on by the Commissioners of both Kingdoms on 22 July 1706* (Edinburgh, reprinted Dublin, 1706, ESTC T22510).

proliferation of advertisements for tracts appertaining to these and other British political events, and by the observation of a political insider, by way of an explanation of a request for ‘an account of anything material that passes on your side of the water’, that ‘you know the thirst we have after news from England’.<sup>26</sup>

This ‘thirst’ proved more enduring than the appetite for English print, as intense party rivalry in the later years of Anne’s reign increased the production and consumption of political commentaries of a domestic origin. Thus the years 1713–14 witnessed a spate of partisan publications prompted by the dispute over the Dublin mayoralty, as well as the systematic use (for the first time in Irish history) of print to promote a political message in the run-up to an election.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, it was followed by an abbreviated ‘pamphlet war’ on the morality of drinking toasts to the ‘memory of the dead’. Based upon this, and Archbishop King’s reference to a pamphlet about a bill of commerce that was a cause of disagreement at Westminster, it is apparent that the political nation in Ireland needed little persuasion of the value of print in promoting and advancing political debate.<sup>28</sup>

The improved political atmosphere that followed the Hanoverian succession provided a less fertile context for political debate, but this proved short-lived as a series of economic and political crises, spanning the years 1719–29, elicited a sequence of controversial interventions that, by highlighting the different priorities of the Protestant interests in Britain and Ireland, was crucial in the generation of a culture of Irish political print. The initial stimulus was provided by the decision of the Westminster parliament in 1720 to approve the Declaratory Act that formally empowered British peers and MPs to make law for Ireland. Political opinion in Ireland was outraged, and the most troubling literary manifestation of the ‘seditious spirit’ decried by English officeholders was the re-publication in the summer of 1719 of William Molyneux’s *Case of Ireland*. This, it was reported, was ‘in every bodies hands’ and ‘passes among them as altogether unanswerable’, to the dismay of those who believed (wrongly) that because it had been ‘burnt by the English House of Commons in 1698’, its seditiousness was not in doubt.<sup>29</sup> They had further cause for unease in the following year when, with

<sup>26</sup> *Dublin Intelligence*, 18 July 1702; *Dublin Gazette*, 3 Dec. 1706, 12 July 1707, 1 Mar. 1709; Primate Boulter to Charles Delafaye, 9 Apr. 1726 (PRO, SP63/387).

<sup>27</sup> The rival Tory and Whig candidates used newspapers—the short-lived *Anti-Tory Monitor*—and pamphlets such as *The Case of Sir William Fownes and Martin Tucker Esq. with Relation to the Late Election of Members of Parliament for the City of Dublin* (Dublin, [1713], ESTC T20138) to promote their respective causes.

<sup>28</sup> A. R. Winnett, *Peter Browne: Provost, Bishop, Metaphysician* (London, 1974), 68–85; King to Sterne, 3 August 1713 (TCD, MS 750/4 f. 117).

<sup>29</sup> Nicolson to Wake, 1 Sept. 1719 (Gilbert Library, Dublin, MS 27, f. 239); Evans to Wake, 9 Aug. 1719, cited in Philip O’Regan, *Archbishop William King of Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 270.

'discontents and murmurs' still rife, Jonathan Swift presented the public with his *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*. Though Swift was not promoting a new idea, his intervention was roundly condemned by those in power because, in the words of the grand jury of County Dublin, it sought deliberately to 'inflam[e] . . . the minds of the people, to disturb the peace of the kingdom and foment divisions among His Majesty's subjects of these nations', and his printer, Edward Waters, was ordered for trial for libel. This was the usual response to challenges of this nature, but in a telling expression of the new found political confidence of Irish Protestants, the jury famously defied the instructions of the judge and failed to hand down the anticipated guilty verdict.<sup>30</sup> It was an important victory for the nascent voice of Irish patriotism, and its significance was underlined by the volume of hostile political print that in 1720–1 greeted a controversial proposal to establish a Bank of Ireland.<sup>31</sup>

Though the ease with which the House of Commons in December 1721 pursued John Harding, the printer of a satirical 'last speech and dying words' on the Bank of Ireland project, for perpetrating 'a false, scandalous and malicious libel reflecting on the justice and honour of this House' indicated that the right to debate political issues openly asserted between 1719 and 1721 had still some way to go, the momentum was clearly with its Irish advocates.<sup>32</sup> This was confirmed in the mid-1720s when the publication of news that a patent authorizing the minting of low denominational coin for Ireland had been sold to William Wood, a Wolverhampton iron manufacturer, prompted a loud and sustained outcry. Of the voices raised in protest, Swift's *Drapier* is properly the best known, but it is equally striking that it was widely circulated. An exceptionally large edition of two thousand of the *Drapier*'s first letter 'advising the people what to do' was produced, and it was joined in the print marketplace by forty 'inflammatory pamphlets', by the main newspapers, even by the popular ballad (in folio sheets), in the single greatest effusion of domestically generated political print yet witnessed in Ireland.<sup>33</sup>

Although there was an inevitable contraction in the aftermath of the Wood's halfpence dispute, it is striking that the production of political print in the late 1720s remained at or above the level registered during the final

<sup>30</sup> Nicolson to Wake, 9 June 1720 (Gilbert Library, Dublin, MS 27, f. 264); *Dublin Gazette*, 4 June 1720; Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 144–5; David Nokes, *Jonathan Swift: A Hypocrite Reversed* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 265–9.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Ryder, 'The Bank of Ireland, 1721: Land, Credit and Dependency', *The Historical Journal*, 25 (1982), 557–82.

<sup>32</sup> *Journal of the House of Commons of the Kingdom of Ireland*, 19 vols. (Dublin, 1796–1800), iii. 290.

<sup>33</sup> David Dickson, *Ireland: New Foundations 1660–1800*, 2nd edn. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000), 74; *The Drapier Anatomiz'd: a Song . . .* (Dublin, 1724, ESTC.T5262); *An Excellent New Song Upon the Late Grand Jury* (Dublin, 1724, ESTC.T5258).

years of Anne's reign. Moreover, it was but the most visible manifestation of a busy print milieu that was now two and a half times larger it had been two decades earlier. The fact that newspapers allocated space to 'Dublin' and 'Country News' is also significant, since it was as indicative as the sequence of political controversies that are better chronicled in pamphlet and broadside of the displacement of the Anglo-Irish culture of political print by one that was recognizably Irish.<sup>34</sup> This was reinforced late in the decade when, as a result of a sequence of bad harvests that plunged parts of the country into famine in 1728–9, commentators were emboldened to venture a more sustained critique of the prevailing mercantilist political economy and to urge greater domestic enterprise.<sup>35</sup> Jonathan Swift's contribution took the form of a series of satirical and polemical interjections, which complemented the more substantial interventions by Thomas Prior, Arthur Dobbs, John Browne, and David Bindon, but it was a matter of equal import that these arguments were taken up and reiterated by the popular press.<sup>36</sup>

The trend in favour of greater freedom of expression to which this attested eased somewhat in the 1730s and 1740s as the amount of political print put into circulation was significantly lower than it was in the mid- and late 1720s. However, the greater availability of proceedings in Parliament, editions of the statutes, trial reports, and broadsides and tracts addressing electoral and other political matters indicated that developments in the 1720s had a permanent effect on the culture of political print.<sup>37</sup> The failure of a number of high-profile seditious libel cases was also important since it signalled the end of the active engagement of the courts, grand juries, and municipal authorities in the policing of print. This left Parliament as the sole-remaining active censoring agency, and it continued successfully, but with greater infrequency, to appeal to the 'privilege of parliament' to curb pamphlet and newspaper printers engaging with contentious political matters.<sup>38</sup> It did not prevent the open debate of major issues, but the quiet efficiency of the undertaker system of parliamentary management minimized the grounds for disagreement. It required the Lucas affair of the late 1740s and the money bill dispute of the 1750s to expose political and personal differences that sustained the more vigorous print culture of the second half of the eighteenth century.

<sup>34</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 137–8, 97–9.

<sup>35</sup> Patrick Kelly, 'The Politics of Political Economy in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in S. J. Connolly (ed.), *Political Ideas in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 105–29.

<sup>36</sup> James Kelly, 'Jonathan Swift and the Irish Economy in the 1720s', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 6 (1991), 20–35; Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 154, 164.

<sup>37</sup> *Remarks on a Pamphlet Intituled the Nature and Consequences of the Sacramental Test Consider'd* (Dublin, 1732, ESTC T1550043); *Advice to the Freemen and Freeholders of the City of Dublin in their Choice of a Representative* . . . ([Dublin], 1733, ESTC 196128); *Dublin Gazette*, 4 Jan., 25 June, 19 Nov. 1734; 19 Apr., 26 July 1735; 7, 13 Jan. 1736.

<sup>38</sup> *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, iii. 607; iv. 211, 212, 213, 214, 216.

## Print and Politics in Late-Eighteenth-Century Ireland

As 'the recognized vehicle of political controversy',<sup>39</sup> the sharp increase in the number of pamphlets published during the ten years 1747 to 1756 spanning the Lucas affair and the money bill dispute constituted the most sustained surge in political print in Ireland registered to that date. It was also enduring, as once the immediate crises were over, the output of political print stabilized at a level at which it was to remain for three decades.<sup>40</sup> There is no single reason for this, but a contributory factor is to be found in the fact that Lucas's publications created a new audience among 'the Protestant dispossessed', whose cause he championed. Lucas presented his opinions in support of his campaign against oligarchical control of Dublin Corporation at great length in a series of some thirty tracts, whose most notable component was a sequence of twenty 'addresses to the freemen and freeholders of Dublin' published in 1748–9. He also launched and contributed to the *Censor*, a short-lived political journal that was still more forthright in its promotion of his radical patriot agenda. The political elite in response appealed to the House of Commons to neutralize Lucas's criticisms, and their determination that he was 'an enemy of his country' because his writings 'highly and unjustly reflect . . . on the King, Lord Lieutenant and parliament' obliged him to flee the kingdom to avoid incarceration.<sup>41</sup> It put an end to Lucas's political efforts for a decade, but this was of lesser consequence in the longer term than the fillip his intervention gave political debate. One of the most significant manifestations of this was the preparedness of the news press, which had remained largely apolitical since the 1720s, to report the Lucas affair and to carry the declarations of Lucas's supporters. Had politics reverted to the predictable and uneventful pattern of the 1730s and early-1740s as many among the ruling elite expected, this might not have been sustained, but it was followed shortly afterwards by the still more divisive money bill dispute.

Although the money bill dispute was first and foremost a power struggle *within* the ruling elite, the capacity of the interest headed by Henry Boyle, the chief undertaker, to contrast its patriot credentials at the expense of its opponents encouraged a surge in political print. Significantly this was less vulnerable to the disparagement and marginalization to which Lucas's

<sup>39</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 171.

<sup>40</sup> According to Richard Sher, the number of imprints produced at Dublin was 2,402 in the 1750s, 2,405 in the 1760s, 2,163 in the 1770s, and 2,757 in the 1780s ('Corporatism and Consensus in the Late Eighteenth-Century Book Trade: The Edinburgh Booksellers' Society in Comparative Perspective', *Book History*, 1 (1998), 34).

<sup>41</sup> Dickson, *New Foundations*, 95–7; Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 170–80; *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, v. 12, 13, 14, 17, 27.



writings were subject. This reflected the better social standing of the participants, who included a number of eminent political figures and respected authors—Judge Christopher Robinson, Sir Richard Cox, Georges Edmond Howard, Henry Brooke—among their number. This did not guarantee a more courteous exchange of views, but it ensured that the political debate was more wide-ranging; and since the patriots proved more adept than their opponents at presenting their case (as the compilation the *Patriot Miscellany*, which comprised forty-two titles, exemplifies) it revealed that they were more responsive to the growing public demand for political print.<sup>42</sup> Not that the administration was totally outgunned. It contrived with some success to put its point of view by sponsoring and circulating pamphlets defending its position,<sup>43</sup> and this intense competition for dominance in the public sphere was crucial in ensuring that the number of political pamphlets published during the 1750s and the 1760s was substantially greater than it had been in the 1730s and early 1740s. It also ensured that political debate was more overtly ideological, as the contrast between the political worlds drawn by Lucas and the patriots of virtuous patriots, corrupt placemen and unprincipled administrators encouraged others to take up and to develop these themes, so that the 1760s and 1770s witnessed a stream of commentaries on such issues as political patronage, financial management, the duration of Parliament, and Poyning's Law.<sup>44</sup>

The ascendancy of the pamphlet in the culture of political print was facilitated in no small way by the fact that (other than a number of individual titles), its main potential rival, the news press, was reluctant to afford politics extensive coverage. Improvements in design and composition meant that pamphlets were now easier to read, while successful imaginative strategies, such as the adoption of the 'querist' approach pioneered by Bishop Berkeley in which he pioneered the style of intellectual interrogation, were used repeatedly.<sup>45</sup> As a result, in direct contrast to the situation in the 1720s when Jonathan Swift was obliged to have recourse to 'disreputable printers' to usher his controversial views into the public arena, the pamphlets published in the course of the money bill dispute were the work of some of the most

<sup>42</sup> *Patriot Miscellany: or a Collection of Essays Relative to the Political Contests in Ireland, During the Administration of the Duke of Dorset*, 2 vols. (Dublin, 1756, ESTC I11549); Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, 213.

<sup>43</sup> Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, 211, 213. According to the *Universal Advertiser*, Christopher Robinson's *Considerations on the Late Bill for Payment of the Remainder of the National Debt...* (Dublin, 1754, ESTC T165374) was distributed gratis at the Post Office (Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 186).

<sup>44</sup> For example, [Robert French], *The Constitution of Ireland and Poyning's Law explained* (Dublin, 1770, ESTC I8204).

<sup>45</sup> For example, *Patriot Queries Occasioned by a Late Libel Entitled Queries to the People of Ireland* ([Dublin, 1754], ESTC T43783).

eminent practitioners of the printer's craft.<sup>46</sup> Significantly, they were now sufficiently respectable for young politicians like Edward Newenham to collect in large numbers.<sup>47</sup>

Based solely upon price, it might be argued that the audience for political print in pamphlet form in the mid-eighteenth century did not extend much beyond 'country gentry and county freeholders'.<sup>48</sup> However, as the passionate support forthcoming in Dublin for Lucas illustrated, political awareness was not so narrowly confined and, stimulated by the example of *The Censor*, a small number of newspaper publishers were more forthcoming with political comment. Saliently, this was most obvious in the case of the *Universal Advertiser*, founded in 1753 to counter the official line offered by George Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, which seems to have achieved new record levels of circulation.<sup>49</sup>

Given this environment, it was only a matter of time before the newspaper emulated the pamphlet as a major vehicle of popular print. This development can be dated to the 1760s and early 1770s, and it was a logical corollary of larger social forces such as improvements in the levels of general literacy. Fifty-one per cent of males and 30 per cent of females born in Ireland between 1766 and 1775 could read, which made possible the 'surge in provincial printing' that saw the extension of printing to eighteen provincial centres between 1766 and 1790. Prior to this a crucial moment had been reached in 1763 with the foundation of the *Freeman's Journal*.<sup>50</sup> As the 'first patriotick channel of popular intelligence' devoted to the advancement of the Whig-patriot agenda favoured by a growing constituency within Irish Protestantism, it was committed as a matter of policy to the provision of space to commentators supportive of this position.<sup>51</sup> Charles Lucas was among their number, but of greater significance for the continuing development of the culture of political print, it attracted individuals within the ranks of the growing phalanx of patriots in the House of Commons drawn by the prospect of an expanded audience. Henry Flood, the most popular opposition politician of the day, was chief among these. He published two series of political letters in which he advanced a strong critique of the direction that Lord Townshend, who was Lord Lieutenant from 1767 to 1772, was taking the government of Ireland. Flood's interventions did not pass unchallenged,

<sup>46</sup> Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 134.

<sup>47</sup> Kelly, *Sir Edward Newenham*, 27–30.

<sup>48</sup> Dickson, *New Foundations*, 101.

<sup>49</sup> Harris, *Politics and the Nation*, 211–12; Eoin Magennis, *The Irish Political System, 1740–65: The Golden Age of the Undertakers* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 76.

<sup>50</sup> Niall Ó Ciosain, *Print and Popular Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 33–8; W. G. Wheeler, 'The Spread of Provincial Printing in Ireland up to 1850', *Irish Booklore*, 4 (1978), 9.

<sup>51</sup> R. R. Madden, *History of Irish Periodical Literature from the end of the Seventeenth to the Middle of the Nineteenth Century*, 2 vols. (London, 1867), ii. 373–80; *Freeman's Journal*, 13 Aug. 1773, 22 Mar. 1774.

but this was of lesser importance than the decision in 1772 to present the letters to the public in pamphlet form along with a sequence of commentaries by other authors, as *Baratariana: A Select Collection of Fugitive Political Pieces*. This indicated that the political newspaper was now the equal of the pamphlet in the world of political print.<sup>52</sup> The decision subsequently of Brutus (Edward Newenham) and Humphrey Search, two of the most prolific and influential newspaper commentators in the same political tradition, to republish several collections of their newspaper articles in an identical pamphlet format over two volumes bears this out.<sup>53</sup> No less pertinently, the Irish administration followed suit. Conscious that he could not afford to cede the public sphere to his critics, Lord Townshend recruited his own band of ‘scribblers’ to convey the administration’s point of view, and it is noteworthy that as well as pamphlets they also employed the *Dublin Mercury* newspaper, which for a time became an ‘organ of the Irish government’.<sup>54</sup>

Significantly, the edge the *Freeman’s Journal* gave the loose coalition of patriots, Whigs, and reformers in the public arena during the late 1760s was sustained throughout the 1770s. The foundation in 1772 of the *Hibernian Journal* was important in this respect, as was the establishment in 1778 of the *Dublin Evening Post* since it meant, with the gravitation of the *Freeman’s Journal* towards the administration in the late 1770s, that the most energetic newspapers of the day supported the patriots’ agenda of commercial and constitutional reform throughout this period.<sup>55</sup> It also contributed greatly to the broadening of the realm of political debate as, following the controversial overturn of the prohibition on reporting proceedings at Westminster, the *Hibernian* and the *Freeman’s Journals* commenced in 1772 reporting the proceedings of the Irish parliament. Others did likewise. As a result, it was possible from this point for anyone with the appropriate reading skills to keep up to date with events in the main political forum in the land. The decision, beginning in 1782, to produce a detailed record of each session—*The Parliamentary Register*—reinforces the impression conveyed by the frequency with which Edward Newenham and others relayed newspapers carrying

<sup>52</sup> James Kelly, *Henry Flood* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 137–41; *Baratariana: A Select Collection of Fugitive Political Pieces* (3 editions, Dublin, 1772–7, ESTC N15369, T21365, T21366).

<sup>53</sup> Brutus [Sir Edward Newenham], *The Political Monitor: Exhibiting the Present State of Affairs in Ireland . . . in a Series of Letters First Published in the Freeman’s Journal . . .* (Dublin, 1772, ESTC 53829); *Essays Historical, Political and Moral, Being a Proper Supplement to Baratariana by Brutus and Humphrey Search*, 2 vols. (Dublin [1773], ESTC I11087).

<sup>54</sup> Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries*, 47; E. M. Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, 6 vols. (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2003), i. 134; *Dublin Mercury*, 1767–72; Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000), 294.

<sup>55</sup> Madden, *History of Irish Periodical Literature*, ii. 425; *Hibernian Journal*, 1772–82; *Freeman’s Journal*, 1772–80.

parliamentary news to friends and family abroad that these reports were closely scrutinized.<sup>56</sup>

Some perspective on just how important a contribution the press made to the expansion of the culture of political print can be provided by an exploration of newspaper circulation. On the basis of the receipts from the stamp tax introduced in 1774, which indicate that the fourteen newspapers produced each week in Dublin enjoyed a total circulation of approximately 45,000 copies, and the application of British estimates that every newspaper was read by between twenty and fifty people, the total audience for each of the three issues of the Dublin papers produced weekly was somewhere between 300,000 and 750,000. The readership of the twenty-seven provincial papers was, it is assumed, considerably smaller, but given that the *Belfast Newsletter* enjoyed a circulation of 2,100 in 1789, it is apparent that the total newspaper audience was sizeable.<sup>57</sup>

The print runs of pamphlets were smaller than those of contemporary newspapers, and it is reasonable to assume that the audience for pamphlets was smaller also. However, because influential political interventions by Owen Roe O’Nial (Joseph Pollock), Guatimozin (Henry Jebb), and an Irish Helot (William Drennan) featured prominently in both media, it is hazardous even to attempt to assess their relative impact. What is demonstrable is that works such as Owen Roe O’Nial’s *Letters*, published in 1779, excited such interest that George O’Malley of Mayo encountered difficulties obtaining a copy because ‘the country gent[leme]n in towne [are] buying all they mett [sic] and sending them to theyr friends in theyr different countys’.<sup>58</sup> Such first-hand reports are elusive, but the proliferation of titles produced in respect of commercial, constitutional, and parliamentary reform between 1779 and 1785 indicates not just that the pamphlet remained a key medium for political print, but that it continued to exercise considerable influence. This observation is reinforced by the willingness of the London publisher John Murray to produce tracts such as John Curry’s *Observations on the Popery Laws* for circulation in Ireland.<sup>59</sup> It is also notable that pamphlets were now held in sufficient esteem to be retained and elegantly bound.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Edward Newenham to Edward Worth Newenham, 29 Nov. 1779; 19 May, 12 July 1780; 9, 16 Mar. 1781 (Newenham papers, in private possession); James Kelly, ‘Reporting the Irish Parliament: The *Parliamentary Register*’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 15 (2000), 166–8.

<sup>57</sup> Blanning, *The Culture of Power*, 156; Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper*, 87–8.

<sup>58</sup> R. B. McDowell, *Irish Public Opinion, 1750–1800* (London, 1944), 78 ff; [Joseph Pollock], *Letters of Owen Roe O’Nial* (Dublin, 1779, ESTC N2742); ‘Reports on Private Collections: O’Malley papers’, *Analecta Hibernica*, 25 (1967), 193–4.

<sup>59</sup> William Zachs, *The First John Murray and the Late Eighteenth-Century Book Trade* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 113.

<sup>60</sup> Edward to Edward Worth Newenham, 21 Mar. 1782 (Newenham papers, in private possession); Kelly, *Edward Newenham*, 25.

In obvious contrast to the proponents of political change who revelled in this active print culture, the authorities observed the proliferation of liberal newspapers and reform-oriented pamphlets with ill-concealed unease. Like MPs who, in the 1760s and 1770s, appealed to the privilege of Parliament with diminished enthusiasm to curb political print, the administration hesitated to take any steps that might prove counter-productive but their instinctive belief in the necessity of regulation to curb the ‘licentiousness’ of the press remained strong.<sup>61</sup> This was revealed after the concession of free trade, when MPs pursued a complaint in the spring of 1780 against the *Hibernian* and the *Freeman’s Journals* for libelling and ‘grossly aspersing the proceedings of parliament’. No serious penalties were imposed, but the Chief Secretary, Richard Heron, was unwilling to acquiesce any longer in a situation in which the government was without active press support. He oversaw the allocation in 1781 of £50 per annum from the secret service list to a ‘Mr Nolan . . . for managing the *Freeman’s Journal*’.<sup>62</sup> In practice, the administration remained on the back foot until 1784 when, as a result of ‘a daring, false, scandalous and seditious libel’ perpetrated by the *Volunteers’ Journal*, officials were enabled to shepherd the 1784 Press Act onto the statute book. This served the useful purpose of preventing newspaper owners from concealing their identity, but it was of secondary import to the proceedings taken in support of the privilege of Parliament that hastened the demise of the *Volunteers’ Journal*. Similar actions taken in respect of the *Hibernian Journal* and *Dublin Chronicle* did not prove so damaging, but the net effect of these interventions and the policy of buying the support of other papers pursued in the 1780s so thinned the ranks of the liberal press, that experienced commentators like Edward Newenham complained that ‘you cannot even have a paragraph inserted in [our Irish newspapers] unless it be in favour of government’.<sup>63</sup>

This was an exaggeration, but there is no doubt but that the initiative now lay with the administration and the forces of conservatism. This was demonstrated in 1787–8 when the champions of the Church of Ireland, who feared for the future of their church if liberals were enabled to advance a programme of tithe reform, demonstrated that conservative interests could also successfully employ print to advance their agenda.<sup>64</sup> This became a matter of some importance a few years later when, as a consequence of the

<sup>61</sup> *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, vi. 97, 208, 209; vii. 282, 284, 286; viii. 38, 344.

<sup>62</sup> *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, x. 195; Heron to Eden, 4 Jan. 1781 (BL, MS 344217, f. 293).

<sup>63</sup> Brian Inglis, *Freedom of the Press in Ireland, 1784–1841* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), 38–49; *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, xi. 261, 262, 267, 277, 278; xii. 120, 425, 426; Newenham to Franklin, 15 Nov. 1786 (American Philosophical Society, Franklin Papers, xxxiv/168).

<sup>64</sup> James Kelly, ‘The Genesis of Protestant Ascendancy’, in Gerard O’Brien (ed.), *Parliament, Politics and People* (Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 1989), 93–127; W. J. McCormack, *The Dublin Paper War of 1786–8: A Bibliographical and Critical Enquiry* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993).

reverberations of the French Revolution, the ideological struggle of liberal and conservative was resumed, and the contest for control of the public sphere achieved a new intensity.

## Print and Political Life

The number of titles printed in Ireland in the 1790s was more than 50 per cent greater than that in the 1780s. With the surge that had taken place in the 1720s, this was the most dramatic rise in print in the course of the eighteenth century in Ireland, and although it is not clear precisely what proportion of these additional titles belong to the culture of political print, the close chronological link between the increase in the number of available titles and the sharp increase in political activity in the 1790s suggests that it was substantial.<sup>65</sup> This conclusion is sustained by the fact that those seeking to reconstitute the political system along more socially and denominationally inclusive lines tried consciously to employ print as the main medium to propagate their message. Impelled by the conviction that it was in their interest to make 'every man a politician', they embarked on a programme of mass political education.<sup>66</sup> Thus, a huge edition of ten thousand copies of Wolfe Tone's vastly influential plea for religious toleration—*Argument on Behalf of the Catholics of Ireland*—was, according to Thomas Addis Emmet, 'circulated with unceasing industry and perseverance throughout the province of Ulster, while a cheap edition', costing one penny, which was less than it cost to purchase a newspaper, was available in Dublin.<sup>67</sup> Comparable initiatives employed to disseminate Paine's *Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason* were also successful in that it was reported from Cork and Ulster that Paine's works were widely read by the poor and marginalized.<sup>68</sup> This outcome was assisted by advances in popular literacy noted by R. L. Edgeworth, but since the levels of proficiency achieved were not always sufficient to permit the interpretation of difficult texts, the adaptation of popular print forms proved

<sup>65</sup> According to Sher's figures, 4,346 imprints were published in Dublin in the 1790s as compared with 2,757 in the 1780s ('Corporatism and Consensus in the Late Eighteenth-Century Book Trade', 33–4).

<sup>66</sup> See Kevin Whelan, 'The Republic in the Village: The Dissemination and Reception of Popular Political Literature in the 1790s', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 103 and passim, 101–40.

<sup>67</sup> Cited in C. J. Woods, 'The Contemporary Editions of Tone's *Argument on behalf of the Catholics*', *Irish Booklore*, 2 (1972), 224. The price of the *Belfast Newsletter* in the 1790s was 2d.

<sup>68</sup> J. R. R. Adams, 'Some Aspects of the Influence of Printed Material . . . in Eighteenth-Century Ulster', in Alan Gailey (ed.), *The Use of Tradition* (Cultra: Ulster Folk and Transport Museum), 117; R. Loeber and M. Loeber, 'Fiction Available to and Written for Cottagers and Their Children', in Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale*, 138.

particularly helpful. To this end, the United Irishmen prepared ‘compilations’ from the writings of Godwin, Locke, Voltaire, Paine, and others. They reanimated the broadside, which they employed as a poster and distributed as a free sheet. They produced songbooks, which helped them to negotiate the literacy barrier and to generate a popular *esprit de corps*. Also, building on the model pioneered by the *Freeman’s Journal*, they raised the circulation of the popular newspaper to a notable 4,000 for the *Northern Star* and an exceptional 6,000 for *The Press*.<sup>69</sup>

The unprecedented circulation of political print suggested by these figures, and of the United Irish message more generally, was aided by book clubs that promoted political engagement. This set them apart from the circulating and subscription libraries, which declined to subscribe to pamphlets, newspapers, and other conduits of contemporary political information.<sup>70</sup> It also made these bodies targets for those opposed to change, who developed and propagated their own conservative print to considerable effect.<sup>71</sup> However, in sharp contrast to liberals and reformers, who celebrated free and open expression, and who, in the words of the *Dublin Morning Post*, regarded ‘the liberty of the press to publish one’s thoughts [a]s absolutely essential to free government’, there were those on the conservative side whose priority was to silence their ideological opponents, and they were not always concerned to ensure it was done legally.<sup>72</sup> The most infamous intervention resulted in the destruction of the presses upon which the *Northern Star* was printed, but a similar fate befell the *Roscrea Southern Star*, whereas the seizure of the type used to produce the *Harp of Erin* in Cork also disrupted its publication.<sup>73</sup> Meanwhile, Parliament intensified its policy of curbing the press. Ten cases, involving six newspapers, were taken in the course of the 1790s, and a number of printers were summoned to account in further instances.<sup>74</sup> In addition, arising out of the establishment in February 1798 of a Commons’ committee ‘to take into consideration the many treasonable publications lately in

<sup>69</sup> Whelan, ‘The Republic in the Village’, 103, 108, 115–16, 124–5; M. H. Thuente, *The Harp Restrung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Irish Literary Nationalism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994); Gillian O’Brien, ‘Spirit, Impartiality and Independence: The *Northern Star*, 1792–97’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 13 (1998), 7–23.

<sup>70</sup> Paul Kaufman, ‘Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland and Wales’, *The Library Quarterly*, 33 (1963), 299–306; Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries*, 96, 99.

<sup>71</sup> James Kelly, ‘Conservative Political Thought in Late Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, in S. J. Connolly (ed.), *Political Thought in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 206–14; Loeber and Loeber, ‘Fiction . . . for Cottagers’, 139–40.

<sup>72</sup> *Morning Post*, 6 Feb. 1790; *Letters on the Subject of the Proper Liberty of the Press* (Dublin, 1790, ESTC N18989); Whelan, ‘The Republic in the Village’, 102–3.

<sup>73</sup> Wheeler, ‘The Spread of Provincial Print’, 11; Inglis, *Freedom of the Press*, 92–108.

<sup>74</sup> *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, xiv. 67, 70, 79; xv. 130, 133, 136, 185, 199; xvii. 160, 162, 170, 172, 370, 372; xviii. 117, 118, 119; xix. 53, 125. In addition, the London *Sun* was adjudged to have perpetrated ‘scandalous and malicious libels’ in 1798 and 1799 (*ibid.*, xvii. 314; xviii. 17).

circulation', stricter registration procedures were ordained for printers and newspaper proprietors; grand juries were granted the powers to seize and destroy the press and plant of printers who did not conduct themselves with propriety; and no printing press could be set up without a licence.<sup>75</sup> Though not the only force at play, this contributed to a sharp contraction in the number of printers and booksellers in Dublin in the late 1790s to its 1760 level.<sup>76</sup>

It was a negative note upon which to end a century that had witnessed a dramatic growth in political print, and it was masked at the time because the pursuit of an Anglo-Irish union prompted a dramatic surge in the publication of pamphlets in 1798, 1799, and 1800. The number of titles emanating from pro- and anti-union activists comfortably exceeded what was forthcoming during previous controversies—the Wood's halfpence affair and the money bill dispute most notably—but in obvious contrast it did not expand the culture of political print. The debate in print on the union was conducted exclusively through the media of the pamphlet and the newspaper rather than in the more varied media and in the more imaginative forms employed by the United Irishmen. It was representative of a conservative model of political discourse. Yet, this was the model that was to remain in the ascendant until the combination of popular politicization, more sophisticated technology, and cheap paper paved the way for a further transformative surge in the culture of political print in the nineteenth century.

<sup>75</sup> *Commons Jn. (Irl.)*, xvii. 267, 273; 38 Geo III, c. 8; Wheeler, 'The Spread of Provincial Print', 11.

<sup>76</sup> Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 38–9, 52–3.



## Politics and Print: A Case Study

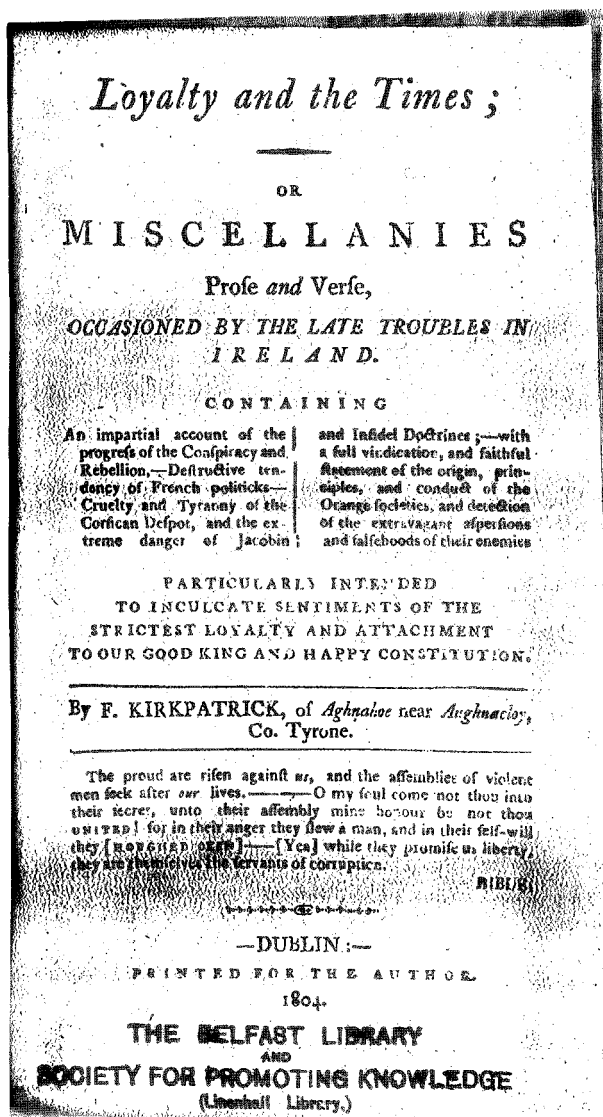
*Allan Blackstock*

The French Revolutionary War that began in 1793 was, in part, the extension of an ideological onslaught on the status quo in Britain and Ireland. In the latter country, this war of words was adopted to such an extent by the United Irishmen that their loyalist opponents coined a term—‘literary mischief’—for the exercise (see Figure 9).<sup>1</sup> Loyalists generated counter-propaganda; yet, apart from Sir Richard Musgrave, whose *Memoirs of the Various Rebellions in Ireland* (1801) was influential and successful, counter-revolutionary publishing has been neglected with Irish historians being, naturally, drawn to the revolutionaries. A short essay cannot redress the balance by tackling the entire issue of the loyalist impact on books; instead this chapter aims to begin the process, using selected pamphlets, broadsheets, and a book *Loyalty and the Times* as a case study, to identify and contextualize broad patterns in loyalist publishing.

### The Political and Ideological Background

The murderous Musgravian polarities of republican rebel and Orange loyalist actually disguise more complex patterns of opinion. Looking back to the early 1790s, those who took up arms in 1798 appear at the extreme of a broader left-of-centre category of radicals and reformers. This reforming movement, in turn, originated in earlier eighteenth-century political ‘patriot’ notions that Ireland, as a separate kingdom under the Crown, should be governed by its own laws and institutions. The climax came in 1782 when, linked to the Volunteers, they achieved the Irish parliament’s ‘legislative independence’. This patriotism was Protestant in composition and orientation but, in the 1770s with Catholics quiescent, some adopted a more inclusive stance. Volunteering split after 1782, with a ‘conservative’ section happy with what

<sup>1</sup> Nancy Curtin, *The United Irishmen* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).



9. Title page of *Loyalty and the Times* (1804).

was achieved, and radicals who wanted to reform the representative system and were prepared to link this with the campaign for Catholic relief. This failed and reform languished until resurrected by the French Revolution. However, the onset of war in 1793 was a defining moment: moderate reformers opted for change within the extant constitution and ultra-radicals continued to support France.

Irish conservative thought was once thought stagnant compared to radicalism, but recent work has revealed its adaptability.<sup>2</sup> The inclusive reform movement of the early 1780s challenged its traditional foundation in the Protestant constitution, but anti-tithe 'Rightboy' protests in Munster in 1785 sparked a 'neo-conservatism' that interpreted the Rightboys as threatening property, law, and the church, and opposed Catholic relief as 'subversive of the Protestant ascendancy'.<sup>3</sup> This conservative revival grew in the 1790s, opposing Pitt's desire to extend Catholic relief in 1793 to boost wartime recruitment.<sup>4</sup> The 1793 Relief Act gave Catholics the freehold vote and allowed militia service, but denied full emancipation—the right to sit in Parliament. Conservative Protestants remained utterly opposed to further relief, but they were not the only conservative-minded group. The Catholic hierarchy opposed the French Revolution and feared a lower-class Catholic secret society, the Defenders. The Irish political spectrum therefore contained a liberal 'reform' tendency to the left, with ultra-radicals or republicans at its extreme, while on the right were centre-leaning Protestants, prepared reluctantly to stomach Pitt's 'Catholic' war policy, and the Catholic hierarchy, ostensibly apolitical but willing to endorse the British constitution.<sup>5</sup> At the edge were neo-conservative 'Protestant ascendancy' men. When war started, committed republicans aside, each group manifested its own form of loyalism.

We can gain an impression of how these political tendencies interacted with print by scanning the British Library catalogue for Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Galway in 1793. Most productions were Dublin-published and, using titles as a rough guide to political orientation, eleven pamphlets were clearly ultra-radical or revolutionary, the same number supportive of the December 1792 Catholic Convention, and five apparently by moderate reformers. A further ten were conservative though, unlike the radical or Catholic pamphlets, they are rarely indigenous publications, typically being reprints of Burke, Hannah More, and De Lome's treatise on the British Constitution. Additionally there were two published Anglican sermons. As the pro-Catholic pamphlets appear to be written by reformers, the clear trend is that conservatism was outpaced in print by liberalism and radicalism. This pattern was replicated in newspapers. Of thirteen newspapers listed in 1793, only two Dublin prints, the *Freeman's Journal* and *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, were 'Castle' papers in receipt of subsidies, while the *Belfast Newsletter* was inclining that way, though it retained Francophile

<sup>2</sup> James Kelly, 'Conservative Political Thought in Late Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in S. J. Connolly (ed.), *Political Ideas in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 185.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 202–5.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Bartlett, 'A Weapon of War as yet Untried: Irish Catholics and the Armed Forces of the Crown', in T. G. Fraser and Keith Jeffrey (eds.), *Men, Women and War* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993), 60.

<sup>5</sup> S. J. Connolly, 'Introduction', in *idem* (ed.), *Political Ideas*, 25.

inclinations until the King's execution. The remainder were openly United Irish, reformist, or commercial and independent.<sup>6</sup>

United Irish newspapers, like Belfast's *Northern Star*, were effective but their vulnerability to government control made the pamphlet's anonymity or the broadsheet's swift and surreptitious distribution safer media. The average pamphlet had a circulation of about 500, with exceptional ones reaching 5,000. The average cost of 1s made them a middle-class preserve, but United Irish societies printed and distributed large numbers for cheap or free distribution to a mass audience. In 1791 the Belfast society printed and distributed 10,000 editions of Wolfe Tone's *Argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland* priced at three pence.<sup>7</sup> Paine's *Rights of Man* (Part 1) was originally prohibitively priced at 3s, but the Dublin United Irishmen sold abbreviated versions at 1d and it was distributed free in Cork.<sup>8</sup> Book clubs also facilitated the dissemination of radical material, whereas many in the book trade itself were 'United'.<sup>9</sup> Such trends form the backdrop against which loyalist counter-publishing arose.

## Early Loyalist Publishing

As with radicalism, the different stands of Irish loyalism reveal connections between printed propaganda and the organization of manpower. Yet conservatives lagged behind their opponents organizationally: sporadic activity was reactive to major crises. As in England, the onset of war precipitated a rash of loyal associations. These ephemeral groups pledged to assist the magistrates and published loyal resolutions, and included conservatives and reformers prepared to work within the constitution. In 1795–6, as the United Irishmen allied with the Defenders in a mass-based insurrectionary movement, scattered loyal associations emerged in Ulster and around Dublin. Some were 'armed associations' led by the landed gentry or Anglican clerics, but others were organized by liberals as 'mixed' associations, simply binding lower-class Protestants and Catholics to uphold the law. Exclusively Protestant loyalism re-emerged in late 1795 with the foundation of the Orange Association. Initially a spontaneous and lower-class organization, the local gentry increasingly took a leadership role. In late 1796, the more active armed associations were absorbed into the Irish yeomanry, a government-controlled part-time

<sup>6</sup> Brian Inglis, *The Freedom of the Press in Ireland, 1784–1841* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), 54–108.

<sup>7</sup> *Belfast Newsletter*, 11 Nov. 1791.

<sup>8</sup> Curtin, *United Irishmen*, 177–9, 181, 185.

<sup>9</sup> Whinnery to Lees, 29 Oct. 1796, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/25/197; Cowan to Cooke, 6 May 1796, 620/23/98.

military force organized in local units that supported the magistrates and military.<sup>10</sup>

A feature of English loyal associations in 1792–3 was the dissemination of cheap accessible material of their own production, and moral tracts like Hannah More's *Village Politics*. Ireland had branches of British tract societies, like the Association for the Discountenancing of Vice founded in 1792. Dublin booksellers advertised *Village Politics* 'to be sold cheap by the hundred' to 'mechanics, journeymen and labourers'.<sup>11</sup> Other counter-revolutionary books also enjoyed large circulation: Burke's *Reflections* went through at least eight Dublin editions.<sup>12</sup> Yet, compared to their English counterparts, the first Irish loyal associations produced little indigenous material. This discrepancy suggests that in the fluid political situation, the status quo was harder to defend than to criticize. Any appeal faced formidable obstacles deriving from Ireland's recent history in Catholic political exclusion and 'patriot' opposition to British policy.

The war in 1793 provided a 'new' issue, particularly when extreme radicals opposed it. Volunteering revived in the early 1790s: some with United Irish links re-invented themselves as 'National Volunteers' in emulation of the French *Gardes Nationales*. The uncommitted faced a dilemma. An Ulster Volunteer 'reform' delegate convention in early 1793 became, effectually, a plebiscite on war, but even this elicited few loyalist publications. One isolated example was by John Pollock, a government supporter whose pamphlet asked Newry's inhabitants to pressurize delegates for resolutions combining a more hearty loyalty with less criticism of Parliament. Its Dublin printing may have aimed at a wider circulation, but the fact that printing was well-established in Newry suggests the local infrastructure was under radical influence.<sup>13</sup> The 1795 armed associations and the early Orange societies also had no publishing impact. In the former case, this may be due to governmental refusal to sanction groups smacking of Volunteering, whereas early Orangeism was plebeian and secretive with no need to propagandize outside its own constituency. By 1796 conservatives realized that loyalism neither competed in manpower nor in the war of ideas. Many reports confirmed the dominance of radical pamphleteering. In June Thomas Whinnery of Belfast's

<sup>10</sup> A. F. Blackstock, *An Ascendancy Army: The Irish Yeomanry 1796–1834* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 61–2, 140, 233.

<sup>11</sup> Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1997), 28, 133–4; *Freeman's Journal*, 23–6 Feb. 1793.

<sup>12</sup> J. Ehrman, *The Younger Pitt*, 2 vols. (London: Constable, 1983), ii. 77; R. B. McDowell, 'Edmund Burke and Ireland', in David Dickson, Dáire Keogh, and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *The United Irishmen* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993), 107–8.

<sup>13</sup> J. Pollock, 'Letter to the Inhabitants of Newry' (Dublin, 1793, ESTC T97289); Ian McBride, *Scripture Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 125; J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1983), 32–4.

Post Office sent a pamphlet to his Dublin superior, warning of 'general circulation amongst the lower orders'. In Roscommon circulation of a 'treasonable pamphlet' necessitated a magistrates' meeting to plan responses.<sup>14</sup>

November 1796 saw stirrings of a central governmental initiative: the Attorney General, Arthur Wolfe, recommended sponsorship of loyal publications 'for the instruction of the people' and to counteract the 'arts' of the 'enemies of social order'.<sup>15</sup> However, this involved co-ordination between local interests and central government, an unnatural situation in the eighteenth century when it was generally accepted that the gentry ran the localities without excessive interference. Wolfe, significantly, was a key intermediary in the plans for a yeomanry, which epitomized this necessary new spirit of local-central co-operation.<sup>16</sup> There was a scattered response to the pamphleteering plan. The Derry loyalist and yeomanry captain, Sir George Fitzgerald Hill, used linen markets as distribution points for free broadsheets, like 'The Farmer's Friend; or a Word to the Wise' of November 1796. Probably printed by the loyalist *Londonderry Journal*, it listed French atrocities in Europe, arguing that their presence in Holland, a linen-producing region, would damage Irish textiles. Hill's pamphlet was not ideologically exclusive in its imagined audience, which was told that 'though you may hold different opinions on Politics or Religion, yet there is one thing in which you are agreed: defending yourselves . . . from rape and robbery . . . from domestic ruffians and from foreign foes.'<sup>17</sup> Hill had new broadsheets printed every week to create the impression that loyalism was dynamic. Similar broadsheets were printed by the *Belfast Newsletter*.

Yeomanry enlistment invoked ideological issues. Paradoxically controversy was often stirred by United Irishmen trying to discourage Catholics and ex-Volunteers from joining. In the former case, they disingenuously asserted the new force was Orange and that Orangemen were sworn to extirpate Catholics. In the latter, the argument centred on the bogus claim that the yeomanry oath implied supporting 'unconstitutional' laws, like suspending habeas corpus.<sup>18</sup> The new loyalist publishing initiative was now evident in ripostes. Rapid counter-publishing is evident as ex-Volunteers became yeomen. When Lord Charlemont, the former Volunteer commander-in-chief, enlisted his old Armagh corps as yeomen, United Irishmen handbills claiming the yeomanry oath violated the '1782 constitution' were soon trumped by loyalist broadsheets.<sup>19</sup> In late December 1796 the capricious gods

<sup>14</sup> Whinnery to Lees, 6 June 1796, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/23/152; Donelan to Cooke, 15 May 1797, 620/30/76.

<sup>15</sup> Wolfe to Cooke, n.d. Nov. 1796, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/26/97.

<sup>16</sup> W. Richardson, *A History of the Origin of the Irish Yeomanry* (Dublin, 1803), pp. i–iii.

<sup>17</sup> Hill to Cooke, 6 November 1796, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/26/103.

<sup>18</sup> 'To Lord Charlemont', 6 Nov. 1796, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/26/32; 'To the Catholics', October 1796, 620/25/150.

<sup>19</sup> 'To the Yeomanry', 8 Nov. 1796, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/26/43.

of coincidence brought another 'issue'. A French invasion fleet lay in Bantry Bay waiting vainly for the abatement of gales, as Dublin Castle dithered about defence. At this moment, yeomen were finally being raised in Belfast after several failures and in the teeth of United Irish opposition. This time the revolutionaries faced the new dynamism in loyalist publishing with a pamphlet printed and circulated so rapidly that the revolutionaries had to respond, reversing the normal pattern.<sup>20</sup> The Munster peasantry's apparent patriotic loyalty during the aborted French invasion was also soon reflected in print. In May 1797, a pamphlet addressed to the Catholics by 'A True-Born Irishman', originally published in early December 1796 and arguing that Orange outrages had been used as a pretext for not enrolling in the yeomanry, was re-printed warning that the invasion threat meant 'there can now be no neutrality for Irishmen' and distributed free.<sup>21</sup>

The parallel emergence of yeomanry and invigorated loyalist pamphleteering is significant. The traditional connection between loyalty and property could be highlighted and, simultaneously, 'patriot' rhetoric could evoke national defence patriotism, the founding principle of original Volunteering. Loyalist publishing patterns in 1795–7 therefore both reflect and affected organizational developments. The inclusive government-stimulated publishing would have been recognizable in Britain, but it did not fully reflect the Irish situation. Orangeism had not impacted on books; yet given its geographical and social spread, the gap in print was as wide as the Boyne.

## Orangeism and Print, 1797–1798

This conspicuous absence was related to a worsening security situation: heartened by proof of French intent, United Irish expansion increased after Bantry and even made inroads into yeomanry and Orange loyalty. Severe counter-insurgency measures were adopted during 1797. In Ulster this was accompanied by a risky strategy on the part of local military commanders, principally Brigadier-General John Knox, whose family already had Orange links. Knox now promoted Orange enlistment in the yeomanry to secure loyalist manpower against infiltration. To this end, he promulgated a crude cultural loyalism, recalling seventeenth-century Catholic rebellions, allowing yeomanry units to take Williamite titles, and even displaying Boyne relics in their parades.<sup>22</sup> Official sanction was needed for new yeomanry corps but, with Orange violence a topic of parliamentary discussion, Knox and his

<sup>20</sup> Anon., *A Handbill Lately Circulated from the Belfast Post Office* (Belfast, 1797, ESTC T216768).

<sup>21</sup> 'A True-Born Irishman', *An Address to the Roman Catholics of Ireland* (Dublin, 1797, ESTC T88084), 14, 38.

<sup>22</sup> Armagh County Museum Blacker Day Book, ii. 208.

prospective Orange yeomen had a credibility problem. The government knew the political risks, particularly with many Catholics serving in the Militia. Even some generals disagreed with Knox. Sir John Moore later asked, 'Can it be sound policy in a government to favour one part of its inhabitants against nineteen who are oppressed?'<sup>23</sup> Yet, as insurgency spread, the manpower benefits were obvious, particularly if elite intervention covered the Orange peasantry's fustian ferocity with the red coat of respectability.

Knox arranged an Orange meeting in Armagh in May 1797, which passed resolutions disavowing any intention to extirpate Catholics but pledging hostility to disloyal men of any persuasion. These were sent to the viceroy, Camden, and published in the *Belfast Newsletter* and the *Dublin Journal*, a pro-government paper owned by the loyalist John Giffard. They were also printed in broadsheets for mass distribution, and were the first Orange-generated publication.<sup>24</sup> Significantly, their appearance coincided with the government's tacit approval of Orange enlistment in mid-Ulster yeomanry corps.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, the first Dublin Orange lodge, which Giffard joined, was formed shortly after this, in June 1797. This Ulster-generated, Dublin-orientated publishing therefore anticipated Orangeism's southward spread. The link between print and the nascent national Orange movement's evolution can be traced across a rapid and convoluted range of initiatives immediately preceding the 1798 rebellion.

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland was established in Dublin in March 1798 to co-ordinate Orangeism nationally and exploit its military potential by a plan to offer the unrealistic total of 170,000 Dublin and Ulster Orangemen for emergency military service if the Castle would arm them.<sup>26</sup> Arming loyal citizens was an accepted wartime expedient, but with Ireland's fractured polity, how could it succeed unless it was non-partisan? The Catholic strand of loyalty offered a possible answer. The Catholic clergy were promoting loyal resolutions. These were published in newspapers, north and south, and at least one pamphlet also appeared. A Carrickfergus priest, Father James McCary, published his pastoral address of 16 January 1798, a thanksgiving day for Duncan's victory at Camperdown.<sup>27</sup> Some influential figures genuinely wanted the Orange offer of service to include Catholics. An Anglican cleric, Snowdon Cupples, who with his superior, Philip Johnson, had promoted early loyal associations near Lisburn, got local Orangemen to produce resolutions

<sup>23</sup> J. F. Maurice (ed.), *The Diary of Sir John Moore*, 2 vols. (London, 1904), i. 275.

<sup>24</sup> Anon., *At a Meeting of the Masters of the Different Orange Lodges on Sunday 21 May 1797 the following Resolutions were passed* (Armagh, 1797, ESTC T216782).

<sup>25</sup> Knox to Pelham, 16 May 1797, BL, Add. MS 33104, f. 236.

<sup>26</sup> Portland to Camden, 2 April 1798, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/40/8.

<sup>27</sup> J. McCary, *Pastoral Address to the Roman Catholics of Carrickfergus* (Belfast, 1798), Belfast Central Library, Bigger Papers, B191; J. Gray, 'A Loyal Catholic Sermon of 1798', *Linenhall Review*, 4(4) (1987), 12–13.



accepting Catholics as fellow-loyalists. Similar resolutions from Moira, County Down, in March 1798 appeared in newspapers and were reprinted in the south as cheap broadsheets 'priced at one half-penny, or 3s 3d a hundred to those who buy to give away'.<sup>28</sup> This coalition of mainly Anglican Orangemen and loyal Catholics would theoretically isolate insurrection to a rump of irreconcilable clergy-defying Defenders and obdurate Presbyterian republicans.

This possibility remained open until early April 1798, when sudden policy changes saw a reversal in official attitudes towards Catholics and Presbyterians. The latter, previously seen as driving the conspiracy, were now courted as potential loyalists by playing on their residual fear of Catholics, who, for their part, were dropped as potential allies. Personnel changes underlay the switch. Lord Castlereagh replaced Thomas Pelham as Chief Secretary; General Lake, a confidante of Knox's, took command of the army from the moderate Abercromby. The transformation was soon evident in accelerating Orange enrolment in the yeomanry. Yet top-level policy changes do not explain why the apparent readiness of ordinary Orangemen to co-operate with Catholics disintegrated so rapidly.

### Orange Books and Books for Orangemen: 'External' and 'Internal' Publishing

This situation can be linked to the emergence of two distinct forms of Orange publication. The first was 'external' to the organization, for example, the resolutions which initially convinced Camden to give Knox latitude to enrol Orangemen in the yeomanry and the early 1798 broadsheets that disavowed United Irish anti-Orange propaganda and publicized the gentry-led rapprochement with loyal Catholics. On the other hand, the attitudes within Orange societies can only be reached through printed material intended for an internal readership. Orangeism's spread to Dublin soon impacted on the capital's rich print culture.

In March 1798 a poem, *Orange: A Political Rhapsody*, dedicated to John Claudius Beresford, a founder member of the Grand Lodge, appeared anonymously. The author was most probably John Giffard, who had encountered Ulster Orangeism while on duty with the Dublin City Militia in 1797. The printer, George Faulkner the younger, compiled an extensive glossary, often identifying informants only by acronyms, strongly suggesting an audience of cognoscenti. The *Rhapsody*, which went through at least nine editions, addressed crucial issues: the Orange manpower offer, the Catholic

<sup>28</sup> Cupples to Archer, 20 Dec. 1797, NA, Rebellion Papers, 620/33/181; Declaration of Moira Protestant Meeting, 27 March 1798, PRONI, Granard Papers T3765/M/3/6/21.

liaison, relations with Presbyterians, and Orange centralization. Its third canto reveals internal tensions over Catholic loyalism, which sets the context of incorrigible Popery:

Alas, 'tis true; nor let us fondly dream,  
That Popery in all times is still the same . . .  
But whom can such repentant vows deceive,  
Treason again will plot, and rogues again will thieve.

No such historical millstone was hung around Presbyterian necks. Their radicalism was linked to the Cromwellian Puritans. The current convulsions in the balance of manpower are reflected by highlighting the rightful Presbyterian position. Referring to Lord Falkland, a parliamentarian who changed sides at Naseby, the line 'May not a Falkland rise in Castlereagh' glowed with significance. The new chief secretary had once supported radical politics and his father was an Anglican convert from Presbyterianism. Strains are also evident between the aristocratic Grand Lodge and its plebeian northern compatriots. How could the new pan-Protestant loyalism be sufficiently 'respectable' for the grandees, yet have enough of Knox's 'Protestant spirit' to make it effective militarily? Social and regional tensions would plague Orangeism and were never fully resolved. Giffard certainly tried in his verse. The first Grand Master was Thomas Verner, brother to the County Armagh MP James Verner, whose estate was in the northern Orange heartland. Soothing homiletic couplets praised the Verners and traced Orange militarism to its Ulster roots:

Can she [Ireland] forget that 'midst an host of foes,  
From VERNER'S care this patriot band arose?<sup>29</sup>

If scarcely heroic in the way that classical rhapsodies were, Giffard's *Rhapsody* was meant to be read aloud and was most definitely political. It therefore lay at the cusp of change, embodying the new militarized, Protestant-monopolized loyalism and anticipating its politicization. The proposed legislative union raised again the question of Catholic emancipation and split the recently unified Irish loyalism (and Orangeism) about whether an Irish or an imperial parliament offered better security for Protestant ascendancy. This sparked an extensive pamphlet debate in which Orangeism and loyalism featured prominently.<sup>30</sup> Some anti-union loyalists even argued that the strategic rationale was wrong and 1798 proved that yeomen and militarized Orangemen could defend Ireland.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> J. Giffard, *Orange: a Political Rhapsody in Three Cantos*, 9th edn. (Dublin, 1798, ESTC T115932), 185–6, 193–4, 320–1, 360.

<sup>30</sup> W. J. McCormack, *The Pamphlet Debate on the Union between Great Britain and Ireland, 1797–1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1996).

<sup>31</sup> A. F. Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801–c1830', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 10 (2000), 332–3.

Appropriating loyalty, therefore, became a powerful component of the argument for maintaining Protestant political ascendancy. The impact on print is exemplified by Musgrave's *Memoirs of the Various Rebellions in Ireland*. In such ways Musgrave transposed Knox's crude cultural loyalism into print. Concentrating on sectarian atrocities in Wexford, he presented the rebellion in the long tradition of Catholic plots. Yet his aims and audience were wider. Initially anti-union, Musgrave now supported its passage without Catholic emancipation. With Irish affairs moving to the Westminster stage, often before an ill-informed audience, his publishing pattern reflects a desire to disseminate the post-rebellion political message about loyalism. The first edition of 1,250 copies, published simultaneously in Dublin and London in March 1801, sold out quickly in an 'unprecedented' demand, and a new quarto edition was rushed out in June 1801, which sold the same quantity. Musgrave's impact in Britain was considerable, shifting British conservative opinion towards accepting that 1798 was a religious insurrection. He was also hugely influential in Ireland. In 1802 a third, two-volume Dublin-only edition sold 1,350, a massive circulation for a bulky work.<sup>32</sup>

Though popular with Irish loyalists, Musgrave's work can be properly seen as an 'external' text, intended for propaganda. It anticipated a form of early-nineteenth-century Orange publishing which arose in response to liberals and radicals subjecting Orangeism to parliamentary scrutiny. The English Catholic historian Francis Plowden repeatedly claimed that Orangemen enrolled by Philip Johnson in loyal associations in 1796 were involved in outrages against Armagh Catholics. This charge precipitated at least three pamphlet denials, typified by Snowdon Cupples's published sermon 'Let not your good be evil spoken of', which contained appendices giving the Rules of the Boyne Society disavowing sectarianism and stressing their law-abiding nature.<sup>33</sup> Such 'external' texts show how ascendancy Protestants wanted Orangeism to appear, but reveal little of how ordinary Orangemen understood the times they lived in.

## Loyalty and the Times: A Case Study of an 'Internal' Orange Text

Books could function as instruments of propaganda, but also as the means for people to identify themselves politically and participate in the struggle.

<sup>32</sup> *Belfast Newsletter*, 19 June 1801; Kevin Whelan, *The Tree of Liberty* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), 135–9; Kelly, 'Conservative Political Thought', 218–19; J. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative, Reaction and Orthodoxy in Britain, 1760–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 240–3.

<sup>33</sup> S. Cupples, *The Principles of the Orange Association Stated and Vindicated* (Dublin, 1799, ESTC T178711); *The Duties of Orangemen* (Belfast, 1804); *A Plain Statement of Facts in Answer to Certain Charges Adduced by Francis Plowden* (Dublin, 1814).

'Reading itself', as Robert Darnton notes, 'has changed over time. It was often done aloud and in groups, or in secret and with an intensity we may not be able to imagine today.'<sup>34</sup> As Giffard's *Rhapsody* indicates, perhaps nowhere would group-reading have occurred with such 'intensity' as in Orange lodges. As union and the politics of loyalty focused public attention on Orangeism, internal publishing was vitally important for a leadership determined to control its members. In the right authorial hands, Orange books for Orangemen were a valuable tool, but without direction, they could be dangerous. In November 1798 the Dublin Orangeman and bookseller, William McKenzie, was disciplined by the Grand Lodge for selling an unauthorized songbook that changed the chorus of 'Croppies lie Down' to 'Papists lie down'.<sup>35</sup>

### *Authorship and Audience*

In 1804 a key internal text was privately published by subscription in Dublin under the revealing title *Loyalty and the Times*. Its author was Francis Kirkpatrick of Aughnacloy, County Tyrone, and it was dedicated to 'The Orangemen of Ireland'.<sup>36</sup> This large work (250 pages with numerous appendices) is a miscellany composed of short prose pieces and poems dealing with current political and military topics. The centerpiece is a long rhapsodic poem 'The Conspiracy', which is reminiscent of Giffard's. Through textual references and a comprehensive subscription list we can identify the author's patron and the nature and geographical location of his audience. Kirkpatrick's immediate patron was Captain John Crosslé, Orangeman and captain of the Aughnahoe yeomanry. His inspiration, however, came from the Verners for whom Crosslé was land agent (five family members subscribed). The subscription list reveals 271 names, plus a further 80 who preferred anonymity. A circulation of around 350 is not extraordinary; however, as many subscribers were Orange lodge masters or officers of yeomanry or militia units containing Orangemen, the true audience was larger and more popularly based.

Most subscribers came from counties Armagh, Tyrone, and Fermanagh, and from Dublin city or the Wexford Militia, districts prominently associated with Orangeism and areas where Knox's Orange-yeomanry scheme operated.<sup>37</sup> The dedication and patronage are doubly significant when we consider that Thomas Verner, as Grand Master of Ireland, had introduced organizational

<sup>34</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (London: Faber, 1990), 131.

<sup>35</sup> Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, *Minute Book*, f. 43; Anon., *Loyal Songs No. 2 as to be Sung in all Orange Lodges in Ireland* (Dublin, 1798, ESTC T127773).

<sup>36</sup> F. Kirkpatrick, *Loyalty and the Times* (Dublin, 1804), 3.

<sup>37</sup> Camden to Castlereagh, 4 Nov. 1798; C. Vane (ed.), *Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh*, 4 vols. (London, 1848–53), i. 424–6.

improvements during 1799 and 1800, devising a structure of county grand masters and a 'New Orange System' with regularized rules to which all Orangemen had to be re-initiated.<sup>38</sup> The scope also reflects the circulation pattern. Kirkpatrick claimed the work was begun in 1797; so with its eventual publication in 1804, it comprehended the 1797 Defender spread into mid-Ulster, the rebellion and union, Emmett's 1803 insurrection, the mass-mobilization stage of the Napoleonic war, and the rejuvenated emancipation campaign. The patterns and chronology of publishing and distribution are so congruent with militarized and politicized Orangeism, that the medium itself appears inextricable from the message. However, what message was mediated down from the elite into the popular levels of Orangeism? Books could change society, but they could also be changed by society, or indeed by societies. Messages could be transmitted up as well as down the social hierarchy. To fulfil the leadership's purpose, Kirkpatrick needed to tailor his content for popular consumption.

### *Content and Reception*

Kirkpatrick's writing reflects some extant patterns. The interpretation of the Wexford rising is decidedly Musgravian, with references to 'priest Murphy' and rhetorical questions like

How many loyal heroes did they kill  
At Gorey, Wexford, Enniscorthy's hill?

Kirkpatrick may well have drawn on Musgrave for his treatment of the south, but for the northern United Irishmen and their Defender allies his material is original and locally grounded. The rhapsodic poem 'The Conspiracy' is replete with local references. Kirkpatrick traces the progress of the Defender alliance through the heartland of General Knox's Orange-yeomanry project where

Protestants of low condition  
Amidst the fiercest opposition  
Should volunteer, in spite of fate  
To stand for country, king and state.

Kirkpatrick's local detail is pin-sharp, to the extent of calling loyalists in various districts their own self-designated local names: the Belturbet Boys, the Newtownbutler Heroes, and the 'boys' from 'Killyman, where treason fled. And loyalty like lightening spread.' Although he strives to follow the leadership line of not 'upbraiding' anyone over religion, Kirkpatrick embellishes

<sup>38</sup> D. Cargo, C. Kilpatrick, W. Murdie, *The History of the Royal Arch Purple Order* (Belfast: Royal Arch Purple Research Group, 1993), 53, 55.

the interpretation of 1798 as a popish plot. The conspiracy is equated with 1641, and an historical 'chronology' dates the start of the current revolutionary disturbances to the establishment of the first Catholic Committee in 1757. Kirkpatrick's intuitive knowledge of his audiences' susceptibilities and his desire to manipulate is revealed in various references intended to arouse their deepest fears. A local rebel committee is depicted as planning to reverse the land settlements, and actual townlands are listed:

The chairman must have Ballygawley  
There's Tullyvare for poet Dawley . . .  
And whoever can destroy  
Most loyalists, gets Aughnacloy.<sup>39</sup>

Kirkpatrick's decision to publish in 1804 was undoubtedly influenced by the new Catholic petition and arguments about enhanced Catholic military service as the conflict with France entered the 'war of resources' stage. This forced him to confront wider imperial issues, including union and the war. James Verner was one of a minority of Armagh Orangemen who had initially supported union. Yet the revitalized connection between Catholic enlistment and political concessions, coming shortly after the Emmett rising, which loyalists believed to be Catholic-inspired, appeared to vindicate Orange anti-unionists. Kirkpatrick twists his text to the Verner position, that union protected Protestant interests. 'This measure', he notes, 'though inconsiderably opposed by many loyal men, is now fully understood to have been the wisest and most salutary means of restoring tranquillity to Ireland.' Regarding the apparent danger of a common wartime patriotism transcending Irish religious and political divisions, loyalists were encouraged to identify themselves in a way that amalgamated their Irishness and Britishness under a wider Protestantism. 'Great George and William's cause' is anachronistically presented as opposing France and hence Catholicism. Kirkpatrick gives his grass-roots audience a treatment of the war and empire, which manages to celebrate British successes, like the Battle of the Nile, while concurrently enlisting them behind the Irish Protestant cause. 'Admiral Nelson's Victory' begins

You true sons of William, attend to my story  
Who fight for your king, constitution and crown  
Great Nassau's renown and the Protestant glory  
To hurl the rebels and infidels down

Kirkpatrick invents terms to distinguish loyal and disloyal Irishmen: Catholics are 'Erin-Gauls'; liberal Protestants who ape loyalty but support emancipation are 'Bonaparte-Protestants'. Irish Orangemen are Britons,

<sup>39</sup> Kirkpatrick, *Loyalty*, 65, 98, 105, 152.

'our British thunder soon made them surrender', and 'true loyalists' whose cause is 'the surest pillar and support of the Protestant interest and our happy constitution'. Thus the struggle with Napoleonic France is presented as the most recent stage in the conflict between the loyal planter and their British Protestant allies and the rebellious natives and their French Catholic friends. Awkward inconsistencies like Napoleon's treatment of the Catholic church and the strong Catholic Irish input in the war effort are ignored. Instead, the silver syllables of liberty and the 'happy constitution' of 1688 stream into the golden age of Protestant ascendancy, now guaranteed by union.<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusions

Thus Kirkpatrick, at his patron's behest, strove by manipulation of his audience's deepest fears to rally plebeian loyalists against the exigencies of the times: the emancipation campaign and the danger that exclusive loyalism could be swamped by national defence patriotism or corroded internally by liberal Protestantism. Kirkpatrick's book thus is interwoven with the patterns but also the ambiguities at the heart of popular loyalism. He frequently advises loyalists to 'be watchful'; insecurity was truly the obverse of the coin of confident ascendancy. Yet, as the 'respectable' author's text had to embody the prejudices of his 'rough' readers and listeners, other meanings are possible for this book and other 'internal', private Orange books, deeper meanings that transcended the words on the page.

Arguably such communally-owned books had a symbolic, almost talismanic, meaning *specific* to the owning group. Early Orange lodge minute books may be compared to *Loyalty*. They were communally owned items, which like other cultural artefacts, were considered to represent group origins and identity. They were sometimes hidden in periods of danger, and passed down through families rather than going to the Orange authorities. Survivals are rare precisely because of this broader cultural significance. One rare example comes from Lisburn Orange lodge, whose original minutes were buried during 1708 and later painstakingly re-copied. This book reveals how members claimed ancestry from a earlier loyal association of 1725 and details an heroic origin story. When the first Orange warrants were being distributed in 1795, two men swam a flooded river to carry it to Lisburn. Doggerel recounting this story in an 1824 entry notes that their descendants were current members.<sup>41</sup> It may be further argued that, as evangelical Protestantism grew, groups familiar to Bible reading and reverence for

<sup>40</sup> Kirkpatrick, *Loyalty*, 3, 258, 269. Nassau was where the House of Orange originated.

<sup>41</sup> Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland Archives, LOL. 152 Minute Book, 1795–1895, ff. 42, 46–7.

*the* book were naturally predisposed to attribute symbolic and instrumental significance to their book. The contrast between such privately produced, sometimes even home-made, books and their 'intense' communal reading and mass-produced, gratuitously distributed United Irish publications could scarcely be more dramatic.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> I thank the following institutions for permission to draw on material in their keeping: Armagh County Museum; Belfast Central Library; the Trustees of the British Library; the Linen Hall Library, Belfast; the National Archives, Dublin, the Deputy Keeper of the Records, PRONI; and the Royal Irish Academy.



# Historical Writing, 1550–1660

*Andrew Hadfield*

John Bale's account of his brief and extremely troubled ecclesiastical tenure in Ireland, *The Vocacyon of Johan Bale to the Bishopricke of Ossorie* (London, 1553), contains a memorable frontispiece. This image shows contrast between the 'English Christian', a decent, honest yeoman, and the 'Irish papist', a wolf in sheep's clothing waiting to prey on his unsuspecting neighbour (see Figure 10).<sup>1</sup> The woodcut clearly owes much to Protestant ecclesiastical satire, which routinely depicted Catholics as wolves in sheep's clothing.<sup>2</sup> It also represents in miniature a developing Protestant historical tradition that contrasted the believers in the true church with those false Christians who worshipped in the worldly church controlled by Satan, a history most fully developed in English in John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments of the Christian Church* (1563, 1570).<sup>3</sup> As soon as the reader opens Bale's autobiographical text, one that represents his sufferings as those of a modern saint, a clear and unequivocal sense of the histories of England and Ireland has been established.<sup>4</sup> English identity can be traced back to the primitive, apostolic church of the first century, whereas Irish character is defined by the misleading evil of the church of Rome.

This image reveals a number of important facts about English and Irish history in the century after the Reformation. First, virtually all historical writing is intertwined with a religious narrative that governs and defines the progress of the text.<sup>5</sup> Second, a history of Irish book history in English in this century cannot be written without reference to work published in England. It makes little sense to omit Holinshed's *Chronicle of Ireland* (1577, 1587),

<sup>1</sup> For comment, see Andrew Hadfield, *Shakespeare, Spenser and the Matter of Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), ch. 5.

<sup>2</sup> See John N. King, *Spenser's Poetry and the Reformation Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), ch. 1; Adam Fox, *Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), ch. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Also developed in Bale's commentary on the Reformation, *The Image of Both Churches* (1550, ESTC S100598). See William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London: Cape, 1963).

<sup>4</sup> See L. P. Fairfield, 'The Vocacyon of Johan Bale and Early English Autobiography', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 24 (1971), 327–40.

<sup>5</sup> Colin Kidd, *British Identities before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

**The vocacyon  
of Johā Bale to the  
bithoprick of Ossorie in Ire  
lāde his persecuciōs in þe same / &  
finall delpueraunce.**



**The English Christiā / The Irishe Papist.**

**¶** God hath deliuered me from the snare of the  
hunter / & frō þe noyome pestilēce. *psal. xcj.*  
**¶** If I must nedes reioyce / I wil reioyce  
of myne infirmittees. *ij. Cor. xj.*

10. Title page of *The vocacyon of Johan Bale* (1553). This striking frontispiece draws on standard motifs, such as the depiction of Catholics as wolves in sheep's clothing. It also serves to reinforce the message of the written word of Bale as suffering Protestant saint.

written by Richard Stanihurst, a prominent Dublin intellectual, and later continued by John Hooker, an Englishman who spent time in Dublin and Munster, given its influence within the British Isles, just because it was published in London.<sup>6</sup> Third, Irish history was a contested and fractious

<sup>6</sup> See Alison Tauffer, *Holinshed's Chronicles* (New York: Twayne, 1999), ch. 4; Colm Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst, the Dubliner, 1547–1618* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1981).

battle of the books, in which different sides sought to assert their right to speak for Ireland, within the Protestant-speaking tradition but there were also those who took a Gaelic and/or Catholic view. In his translation of Gerald of Wales's *Expugnatio Hibernica*, an extraordinarily influential account of the Norman conquest of Ireland written in the late twelfth century, published in the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* (1587), John Hooker berated Gerald for his praise of Thomas Becket. He based the English claim to Ireland on the innate superiority of the civilized, Protestant English to the savage, Catholic Irish, and the rights of ancient conquest rather than the *Laudabiliter* granted to Henry II by Pope Adrian IV, because recognizing any papal bull automatically placed the ecclesiastical authorities above secular government.<sup>7</sup> Geoffrey Keating, author of the most extensive history of Ireland in the early seventeenth century, conceived his work as a means of correcting the ignorance of the scores of 'new foreigners'—Camden, Spenser, Stanihurst, Hooker—who had simply copied Gerald.<sup>8</sup> For Keating, the English histories of Ireland were all simply false testimonies written by men who could not and would not find out the truth.

Keating had good reason for complaint. Books produced in Ireland were subject to a state monopoly. After the first book was printed in Ireland in 1551, just two years before John Bale published his *Vocacyon*, there was only one printer working in Dublin, a state of affairs that continued until 1680. During the turmoil of the 1640s more presses operated in Ireland. As Mary Pollard has pointed out it is little wonder that books produced in Ireland were not designed for Catholic readers as 'the book trade was rooted in the English-speaking Protestant establishment'.<sup>9</sup> Most books were imported into Ireland but there was strict and careful censorship of foreign works to prevent Catholic doctrine, apology, and history reaching an Irish audience. It took until the late seventeenth century for a large enough middle class to develop to enable publishers to produce a greater variety of books.<sup>10</sup>

One of the dominant figures in Irish metropolitan intellectual life in the first half of the seventeenth century was Archbishop James Ussher.<sup>11</sup> Not only

<sup>7</sup> Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, 6 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1807–8), vi. 109.

<sup>8</sup> Geoffrey Keating, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn (The History of Ireland)*, ed. and trans. David Comyn and P. S. Dinneen, 4 vols. (London: Irish Text Society, 1902–13), i. 153. For comment see Bernadette Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating: History, Myth, and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

<sup>9</sup> Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 16.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, 11–12, 32; Raymond Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica*, 29 (1995–7), 31–58.

<sup>11</sup> For details of Ussher's life, see R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967).

was Ussher a prolific author of theological and historical works, he also controlled the purchasing of books for the library of Trinity College, Dublin, making sure that Catholic works were kept out.<sup>12</sup> It is a measure of Ussher's influence that even after his death numerous works appeared that claimed to be his prophecies warning Dubliners of the pernicious threat of Catholics.<sup>13</sup> Ussher's view of history was, in essence, identical to that of John Bale, demonstrating the continuity in Protestant thought in Ireland and England, as he outlined in *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently professed by the Irish and the British* (1631). In the dedicatory epistle to Sir Christopher Sibthorp, one of Charles I's chief judges in Ireland, Ussher lamented the lack of proper religion in Ireland:

The woefull experience whereof, wee may see daily before our eyes in this poore nation: where, such as are slow of heart to beleeve the saving truth of Goid delivered by the Prophets and Apostles, doe with all greedinesse imbrace, and with a most strange kinde of credulitie entertaine those lying Legends, wherewith their Monkes and Friars in these latter daies have polluted the religion and lives of our ancient Saints.<sup>14</sup>

His treatise sought to prove that the Irish and the Britons had both been faithful members of God's church until Catholicism had led many away from the truth (sig. A3v). Ireland was now in greater need of strenuous conversion than the rest of Britain. However, there had been a time when Irish divines were at the forefront of orthodoxy in the early years of the British church, and the 'grounds of sound doctrine' were established (p. 19) with the help of Rome. Equally importantly, 'Our *Monks* were *religious* in deede, and not in name only; farre from the hypocrisie, pride, idlenesse and uncleannesse of those *evill beasts* and *slothfull bellies* that afterward succeeded in their roome' (p. 57). Ussher's pun on roome/Rome explains what has gone wrong in the intervening years. Even St Patrick could not have predicted what would have happened to the church after his death: 'But that St. *Patrick* was of opinion, that the Church of *Rome* was sure ever afterward to continue in that good estate, and that there was a perpetuall priviledge annexed unto that See, that it should never erre in judgement, or that the Popes sentences were always to bee held as infallible Oracles; that will I never beleeve' (p. 87). This particular detail serves to denigrate the significance of the authority of the patron saint—even while excusing his lack of foresight—and so strike a blow

<sup>12</sup> Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 12; Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', *IESH*, 15 (1988), 85.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, *Strange and Remarkable Prophetes and Predictions of the Holy, Learned, and Excellent James Usher* (London, 1678, ESTC R7048); *Bishop Ushers Second Prophecie which he delivered to his Daughter on his Sick-Bed* (London, 1681, ESTC R220946, R235771).

<sup>14</sup> James Ussher, *A Discourse of the Religion Anciently professed by the Irish and British* (London, 1631, ESTC R4892), sig. A2v.

against the Romish cult of holy men and women, showing how disastrous the perverse rise of the Catholic faith has been.

Ussher follows in the footsteps of historians such as Bale in seeing the abrogation of temporal power by the Pope as the key cause of the schism experienced in Ireland.<sup>15</sup> The seeds of this problem were sown early: 'For howsoever *Ireland* at that time [the time of Anglo-Saxon kingships in England] received not the same *lawes* wherewith *other nations* were governed: yet it so flourished in the vigour of Christian doctrine . . . that it exceeded the faith of all the neighbour nations; and in that respect was generally had in honour by them' (p. 117). The irony is that the very success of Christianity in Ireland serves to mask the fundamental problem of Irish society. Ussher asserts England's absolute right to Ireland through the rights of conquest, as well as the subsequent surrender of the Irish chieftains, demonstrating that his episcopalian faith was in line with that of the previous sovereign's understanding that without bishops and there could be no kings (p. 118).<sup>16</sup> There can be no resistance to either church or state, a case that James had also made forcefully in his political works.<sup>17</sup> Ussher claims that kings have God-given power '*for the revenge of the evill, and the praise of the good*. Although he were as wickked, as eyther *Nero* among the *Romans*, or *Herod* among the *Iewes*: the one whereof most cruelly persecuted the *Christians*, the other *Christ* himselfe' (p. 129). The point is clear and decisive: if even Christ did not have the right to resist temporal power then the Irish are certainly duty bound to renounce their allegiance to Catholicism and obey their English masters.

Ussher's *Discourse* expounds the style of argument made in many New English histories of Ireland, such as Barnaby Rich's *A New Description of Ireland* (1610), the same author's *A Short Survey of Ireland* (1609)—both of which argue that Catholicism was the principle cause of rebellion in Ireland—or Sir John Davies's *A Discoverie of the True Causes why Ireland was Neuer Entirely Subdued nor Brought Under Obedience of the Crowne of England, Untill the Beginning of his Maiesties Happie Raigne* (1612), which makes the case that the spread of the law in James's reign has finally brought Ireland back within the fold of civilization.<sup>18</sup> Ussher's scholarly goal was to use all the resources available to him to prove beyond any doubt that his

<sup>15</sup> Knox, *James Ussher*, ch. 10. On Bale see Andrew Hadfield, *Literature, Politics and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), ch. 2; John N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), ch. 2.

<sup>16</sup> See Whitney R. D. Jones, *The Tree of Commonwealth, 1450–1793* (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000), 100–1.

<sup>17</sup> King James VI and I, *Political Writings*, ed. Johann P. Sommerville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), *passim*.

<sup>18</sup> On Rich, see Dorothy Hart Bruce and Thomas M. Cranfill, *Barnaby Rich: A Short Biography* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1953); on Davies, see Hans Pawlisch, *Sir John Davies and the Conquest of Ireland: A Study in Legal Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

version of Christianity was the right interpretation and he 'intended his antiquarian research to bear upon the live issues of faith in his own day'.<sup>19</sup> His most impressive achievement was his Latin *magnum opus*, *Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti* (1650, 1654), soon afterwards translated with an appropriately grand English title to give an accurate sense of the work, *The Annals of the World Deduced From the Origin of Time, and Continued to the Beginning of the Emperour Vespasians Reign, and the Totall Destruction and Abolition of the Temple and Common-Wealth of the Jews: Containing the Historie of the Old and New Testament, with that of the Macchabees, also the most Memorable Affairs of Asia and Egypt, and the Rise of the Empire of the Roman Caesars under C. Julius, and Octavianus: Collected from all History, as well Sacred, as Prophane, and Methodically Digested* (1658). The work was designed to put the historical record straight, and refute the errors of pagans and Catholics alike. Ussher starts at the very beginning, the creation, and the work is now most famous for its opening sentence: 'In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth, Gen. 1. V. 1. Which beginning of time, according to our Chronologie, fell upon the entrance of the night preceding the twenty third day of Octob[er], in the year of the Julian Calendar, 710 [i.e., 4004 BCE]'.<sup>20</sup> Ussher's attempt at precision might seem misconceived, but it aptly illustrates the driving force behind his historical writing, which was the uncovering of the fundamental truth of Protestantism.<sup>21</sup>

Ussher's antiquarian research was concentrated on the Irish church, but he was happy to encourage Irish scholars working in other areas. The most prominent of his protégés was James Ware, who was a student of Ussher's at Trinity College.<sup>22</sup> Ware, like Ussher, wrote mainly in Latin, producing a history of the bishoprics in Ireland (1622, 1628) and a dictionary of Irish writers, *De Scriptoribus Hiberniae* (1639), perhaps intended to complement John Bale's work on British authors, *Scriptorum Illustrium Majoris Brytanniae Catalogus* (1557), a work he used extensively. Ware's most significant historical work in English was his anthology of three works on Irish history that he published as *The Historie of Ireland* (1633).

Ware collected together three chronicles on Ireland written in English, none of which had appeared in print before: Edmund Campion's *A Historie of Ireland* (1571) (although Campion's work had formed the basis of Richard Stanihurst's 'The Historie of Irelande'); Meredith Hanmer's *The Chronicle of Ireland* (1571), completed by Henry Marleburrough; and, most famously, Edmund Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, dated 1596. It is clear from the prefatory remarks and the policy of editing the texts in question that Ware was keen to limit the controversial nature of the histories,

<sup>19</sup> Graham Parry, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquarians of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 135.

<sup>20</sup> James Ussher, *The Annals of the World* (1658, ESTC R22172), 1.

<sup>21</sup> See Parry, *Trophies of Time*, ch. 5.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 153–6.

reduce their polemical impact, and emphasize their value as antiquarian works uncovering the ancient history of Ireland. Campion's text did not pose any serious problems in this regard, although it contains the usual demeaning representations of the native Irish repeated by English authors derived from Gerald of Wales.<sup>23</sup> Campion outlined the geography, nobility, language, people, and history of Ireland from its first inhabitation when Bastolenus, one of the 'retinew' of Japhet, a descendant of Noah, 'wandred so farre West, intending to rule without compeeres, till Fortune cast him and his people upon the coast of Ireland' (Campion's *Historie*, 22). Most of Campion's text consists of a sketchy historical narrative of Ireland, its message being that education will save Ireland from the chaos it had experienced before it was pacified by the English army led most effectively by Sir Henry Sidney, Campion's host in Ireland. The work ends with Sidney's oration to the Irish House of Lords, 12 December 1570, which is an optimistic plea for the integration of the two peoples, made immediately after the speaker, James Stanihurst, father of Richard, had made an eloquent case for establishing grammar schools and a university in Ireland, Trinity College not being established until 1592. Sidney appeals to the anglicized Irish lords—listed earlier in Campion's *Historie*—as a people who are the natural allies of the English to unite against the common foe, the native Irish: 'You must not thinke wee love you so evill, nay rather thinke truly wee tender your quietnesse and preservation, as a nation derived from our ancestours, ingrafted and incorporate into one body with us, disturbed with a sort of barbarous people, odious to God and man, that lappe your bloud as greedily as ours' (Campion's *Historie*, p. 136).

Meredith Hanmer's *Chronicle*, the longest of the three histories in the volume, is less problematic still as the narrative continues only up to 1286 and contains little analytic comment (Marleburrough extended the chronicle only as far as 1421 in sixteen pages). Given that Hanmer, later Bishop of Cork and Ross, was one of Campion's interrogators in London and argued ferociously in print with the Catholic martyr, Ware's juxtaposition of the two authors may well be a gesture intended to suggest that some form of reconciliation was possible even in the fractious field of Irish history. Certainly, there is little hint of the deadly religious dispute contained in the other work that printed their writing side by side, *The Great Bragge and Challenge of M. Champion a Jesuite Co[m]monlye called Edmunde Campion, Latelye Arriued in Englande, Contayninge Nyne Articles here Seuerallye Laide Downe, directed by him to the Lordes of the Counsaile, Co[n]futed & Answered by Meredith Hanmer* (London, 1581). Hanmer frequently includes extracts from his historical sources—Gerald, Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*, Matthew Paris, Bede, Bale, and others—and defers to their authority. He makes no mention

<sup>23</sup> James Ware, *A View of the State of Ireland* (Dublin, 1633, ESTC S1242326); Campion's *Historie*, chs. 5–6.

of the *Laudabiliter*, but cites numerous speeches to show that the Irish chieftains, led by Dermot Mac Morogh, prince of Leinster and effective king of Ireland, surrendered their authority to Henry II.

Edmund Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland* is evidently not a work of the same order. Although it contains much historical material about Ireland and the Irish in the first half of the dialogue, it is really an extended argument for serious military intervention in Ireland in the desperate situation of the late 1590s. The changes that Ware made to the text show that he was aware of the controversial and arguably inappropriate inclusion of the work in the volume. The title was altered so that 'present state' became 'state', placing the work as a historical document by a famous author, not one with any immediate relevance. Ware also made a number of changes to the text, omitting a number of hostile adjectives applied to the Irish such as 'savage', and also passages that excoriated numerous Old English families, branding them as traitors.<sup>24</sup> His prefatory comments indicate how he wants readers to understand Spenser's dialogue. Ware praises Spenser's 'learning and deepe judgement', but speaks for his readership because he suggests that 'we may wish that in some passages it had bin tempered with more moderation'. He asserts that had Spenser 'lived to see these times, and the good effects which the last 30 yeeres peace have produced in this land, both for obedience to the lawes, as also in traffique, husbandry, civility, & learning, he would have omitted those passages which may seeme to lay either any particular aspersion upon some families, or generall upon the Nation'. The reader is directed instead to look more seriously at Spenser as a historian: 'His proofes (although most of them conjecturall) concerning the originall of the language, customes of the nations, and the first peopling of the severall parts of the Iland, are full of good reading; and doe shew a sound judgement' (Spenser, *View*, 'The Preface'). Ware's edition had an enormous subsequent influence and became the standard work consulted by readers of Spenser well into the twentieth century when scholarly editions of *A View* were eventually published. It was used by Milton, Wordsworth, and Yeats, to name but three important and influential authors.<sup>25</sup>

Even if the reader follows Ware's advice, *A View* does not make for comfortable reading. Spenser's analysis of the origins of the Irish is designed to emphasize their savage, mongrel nature, based principally on the influx

<sup>24</sup> The list of changes is given in Edmund Spenser, *The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition*, ed. Edwin Greenlaw et al., 11 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1932–49), x. *The Prose Works*, appendix 3, 519–23. For comment, see Richard A. McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment: Elizabethan Ireland and the Poetics of Difference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 273–6.

<sup>25</sup> See Willy Maley, *Salvaging Spenser: Colonialism, Culture, and Identity* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 121–32; E. Wayne Marjaram, 'Wordsworth's View of the State of Ireland', *Proceedings of the Modern Literature Association of America*, 55 (1940), 608–11; W. B. Yeats, 'Edmund Spenser', in *Essays and Introductions* (London: Macmillan, 1961), 356–83.



of Scythians, a vaguely defined people inhabiting Asia Minor, famed for their cannibalism, as described by Herodotus. He dismisses native Irish learning as fabricated; claims that the Old English who have adopted Irish habits and customs are worse than the native Irish; and ridicules Irish links with Spain.<sup>26</sup> Ware defuses Spenser's work as much as he can, but it stubbornly resists being sanitized. Ware's dedicatory epistle to the Lord Deputy, Thomas Wentworth, later Earl of Strafford, is yet another irony that haunts the text. Wentworth may have looked like a liberal Deputy in 1633, but only eight years later it was his trial and execution, precipitated by the strong reaction to his draconian policies in both Ireland and England, that was one of the first indications that a severe crisis was looming.<sup>27</sup>

*A View* had not appeared in Spenser's lifetime, even though it was entered into the Stationers' Register on 14 April 1598 by the publisher Matthew Lownes.<sup>28</sup> This episode has led many to assume that *A View* must have been censored by the authorities in England, specifically because it is such an aggressive and offensive work. However, the significance of this episode of non-publication probably lies elsewhere. First, very few books on Ireland appeared in England in the sixteenth century, and no major work on Ireland was published in the 1590s apart from Richard Beacon's *Solon his Follie*, published in Oxford in 1594. However, Beacon's work does not advertise the fact that it analyses Ireland. Its sub-title, *Or, A Politique Discourse, Touching the Reformation of Common-Weales Conquered, Declined or Corrupted*, emphasizes the general political importance of the dialogue and the sophisticated adaptation of Machiavellian ideas.<sup>29</sup> The dialogue itself, between the Athenians, Solon, Pisistratus, and Epimenides, continues in a long-established tradition of representing England as Athens (popularized by John Lyly in his prose romance, *Euphues* (1578)), casting Ireland as the conquered island, Salamina.<sup>30</sup> Even though the text was dedicated to the Queen, only a scrupulous reader would realize that *Solon his Follie* was an elaborate discussion of Irish politics—generalizing from the particular case—that recommended

<sup>26</sup> See Andrew Hadfield, *Spenser's Irish Experience; Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), ch. 3.

<sup>27</sup> McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment*, ch. 14; Willy Maley, 'How Milton and Some Contemporaries Read Spenser's *View*', in Brendan Bradshaw, Andrew Hadfield, and Willy Maley (eds.), *Representing Ireland: Literature and the Origins of Conflict, 1534–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 191–208.

<sup>28</sup> For discussion, see Hadfield, *Spenser's Irish Experience*, 78–84.

<sup>29</sup> See Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), ch. 2; Richard Beacon, *Solon His Follie*, ed. Clare Carroll and Vincent Carey (Binghampton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts Society, 1996), introduction, pp. xxvi–xliii.

<sup>30</sup> For discussion, see Sydney Anglo, 'A Machiavellian Solution to the Irish Problem: Richard Beacon's *Solon His Follie* (1594)', in Edward Chaney and Peter Mack (eds.), *England and the Continental Renaissance* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1990), 153–64.

extensive colonization as a means of making Ireland governable from England.<sup>31</sup>

It is surprising that Spenser's *View* was ever entered in the Stationers' Register, given that it was written at a key point during the Nine Years' War when it looked as if Ireland, with Spanish aid, might become an independent Catholic nation, especially if the desperately anxious tone and nature of the dialogue is considered, and the fact that it contains sensitive military information.<sup>32</sup> The work circulated extensively in manuscript. Over twenty copies survive, including those belonging to Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex, and Archbishop Ussher.<sup>33</sup> Given how little control most sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century authors had over the production of their texts, it may be that the answer to this mystery lies in the actions of the publisher rather than the writer.<sup>34</sup> William Ponsonby was Spenser's regular publisher, and by 1598 he was a powerful figure within the Stationers' Company. Matthew Lownes had already pirated an edition of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, publishing a version in 1597 a year ahead of Ponsonby's official edition. It is possible that Ponsonby intervened to prevent Lownes publishing a work by one of his key authors. Equally, it is possible that *A View* did not enter the public realm until 1633 because few works on Ireland were published in English until the country was thought to have been fully conquered in the early seventeenth century.<sup>35</sup> Of course, many works remained in manuscript, including the important Latin treatise by Sir William Herbert, *Croftus Sive De Hibernia Liber*, written c.1591, another work, like *A View*, that sought to analyse Ireland and its history in terms of the political histories of Tacitus and Lipsius, which had become fashionable in English court circles in the 1590s.<sup>36</sup> The manuscript of *Croftus* appears to have been prepared for publication, but never actually produced. The wealth of material that remained in manuscript gave antiquarians in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the opportunity to publish numerous influential works that had never been printed. One such collection was Walter Harris's miscellany, *Hibernica* (1770), which contained

<sup>31</sup> For further discussion see Andrew Hadfield, 'Censoring Ireland in Elizabethan England, 1580–1600', in idem (ed.), *Literature and Censorship in Renaissance England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2001), 149–64.

<sup>32</sup> See John Breen, 'The Empirical Eye: Edmund Spenser's *A View of the Present State of Ireland*', *Irish Review*, 16 (Autumn/Winter 1994), 44–52.

<sup>33</sup> For a list, see *Variorum*, 10, Appendix 3, 506–9.

<sup>34</sup> For discussion, see Jean Brink, 'Constructing *A View of the Present State of Ireland*', *Spenser Studies*, 11 (1990 [published 1994]), 203–28.

<sup>35</sup> For a list of works referring to Ireland in their titles entered in the Stationers' Register between 1580 and 1603, see Hadfield, *Spenser's Irish Experience*, appendix, 203–4.

<sup>36</sup> William Herbert, *Croftus Sive De Hibernia Liber*, ed. Arthur Keaveney and John A. Madden (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992). For a recent discussion, see Andrew Hadfield, 'Cicero, Tacitus and the Reform of Ireland in the 1590s', in Jennifer Richards (ed.), *Discourses of Civility in Early Modern Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), 115–30.

Patrick Finglas's 'Breviate of the getting of Ireland', written during Henry VIII's reign, as well as Maurice Regan's 'History of Ireland', translated by Sir George Carew (1555–1629), Lord President of Munster, and extensive materials relating to the Ulster Plantation.<sup>37</sup>

Lownes may have been marking out an area of interest, establishing himself as a publisher who was interested in producing Irish works. He also published Ralph Birchensa's *A Discourse Occasioned upon the Late Defeat, Given to the Arch-Rebels, Tyrone and Odonnell* (1602), one of the few works on Ireland published in the 1590s and 1600s.<sup>38</sup> He later became Spenser's official publisher, producing the first folio edition of *The Faerie Queene* in 1609. This work contained the six complete books already published in Spenser's lifetime, and also a hitherto unpublished fragment of a seventh book, *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie*. These cantos contained an allegorical story of Diana leaving Ireland for ever after she was discovered naked by the cheeky Faunus (Pan), who had the temerity to laugh when he saw her. Significantly enough, the stanzas narrating this story place 'Ireland' in all capitals, drawing the reader's attention to this section of the allegory.<sup>39</sup> Lownes's efforts were rewarded towards the end of his life when he became the King's Printer in Ireland (1618), along with Felix Kingston and Bartholomew Downes, as the Stationers' Company replaced John Franckton. As such they assumed control of books produced in Ireland. Lownes appears to have stayed in London until his death in 1625, acting as a conduit for books imported from Dublin into London.<sup>40</sup> His career indicates the close relationship between the English and Irish book trades from the first impact of the printing press.

This interaction was, if anything, strengthened in the middle years of the seventeenth century after the outbreak of the War of the Three Kingdoms. As events in Ireland, England, and Scotland unfolded, it became clear that the administrative, political, and social structures that had developed—and been imposed—throughout the British Isles also determined how the print trade functioned. The uprising of Catholics in Ulster on 23 October 1641—almost exactly five months after the execution of Strafford

<sup>37</sup> Walter Harris, *Hibernica: Or, some Ancient Pieces Relating to Ireland* (2 parts, Dublin, 1747, 1750, ESTC T14311, T114313). I owe this reference to Robert Hunter.

<sup>38</sup> Lownes published volumes of poetry (including works by Michael Drayton and Thomas Bastard), history, music, and sermons: see Katherine F. Pantzer, *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1475–1640, Vol. III* (London: Bibliographical Society, 1991), 109–10, for details of the works that Lownes published.

<sup>39</sup> For a persuasive recent discussion that links Spenser's poem to his circumstances in Ireland, see Patricia Coughlan, 'The Local Context of Mutabilitie's Plea', *Irish University Review*, 26 (1996), 320–41.

<sup>40</sup> Mary Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000), 372, 541–2; eadem, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, ch. 1.

(12 May)—illustrates the British nature of English publishing and its important effects throughout the territories ruled from London.

Numerous books and pamphlets appeared almost immediately after the uprising, representing a series of grisly murders in horrific detail, making sure that no one could possibly remain ignorant of the extensive massacre of innocent Protestants. Some were testimonies of eye-witnesses, some newsbooks, and others pious reflections on the nature of the event.<sup>41</sup> The dissemination of information after the occurrences resembles the swift and efficient circulation of equally violent images after the Massacre of St Bartholomew's Day (23 August 1572). The history of the actual event cannot be separated from the explosion of printed material that came in its immediate wake, resulting in particular complexities for historians.<sup>42</sup>

The work that had the most significant influence on subsequent interpretations of the history was Sir John Temple's *The Irish Rebellion, or An History* (London, 1646).<sup>43</sup> Temple's work did contain numerous stories of Catholic brutality: details of how pregnant women were murdered; how Protestant children were forced to kill their parents; how the priests were the driving force behind most murders; how Protestant ministers were killed in especially brutal ways and churches despoiled; and so on. What distinguished it from other works—many of which simply copied details from Temple—was the historical narrative that Temple had carefully constructed to explain the horrific series of events and place them in a theological perspective.<sup>44</sup> Temple, who was clearly heavily indebted to earlier historians, most notably Spenser, argued that the Irish were a naturally wicked and recalcitrant people who were without civilization, essentially the same view of the Irish that Gerald of Wales had promulgated nearly six hundred years earlier. They had been enslaved by their rulers and had failed to establish any proper agriculture or any towns or buildings. All of these were the work of English settlers.<sup>45</sup> The Irish had shown repeatedly that they could not be trusted to govern

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Henry Jones, *A Remonstrance of Divers Remarkable Passages Concerning the Church and Kingdom of Ireland* (London, 1642, ESTC R19041); Sir John Hoyer, *News out of Ireland, Concerning the Warlike Affairs in the Province of Leinster* (London, 1642, ESTC R8637, R202619, R202636); Anon., *The Levites Lamentation* (London, 1643); T. Morley, *A Remonstrance of the Barbarous Cruelties of the Irish Rebels against the Protestants* (London, 1644, ESTC R3534, R232321).

<sup>42</sup> See Robert M. Kingdon, *Myths about the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572–1576* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988); Brian McCurtin (ed.), *Ulster 1641: Aspects of the Rising* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1993); Nicholas Canny, *Making Ireland British, 1580–1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), ch. 8.

<sup>43</sup> See Raymond Gillespie, 'Temple's Fate: Reading *The Irish Rebellion* in Late Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in Ciaran Brady and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds.), *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 315–33.

<sup>44</sup> The most lurid of these works is perhaps the broadsheet, *A Prospect of Bleeding Ireland's Miseries* (London, 1647).

<sup>45</sup> Sir John Temple, *The Irish Rebellion* (London, 1646, ESTC R203774), 5. Subsequent references are noted in parentheses in the text.

themselves and so had surrendered this right to the English. Although the Irish had enjoyed a state of proper religion at various points in their history they had always fallen away from the true faith unless carefully governed by the English, who needed to impose harsh laws to prevent the Irish from continuing in their wicked courses (pp. 10–11). The current disaster, which, according to Temple, resulted in the slaughter of 300,000 innocent men, women, and children (p. 6), stemmed from lax laws that did not control the Catholics enough, enabling them to infect many English settlers so that they ‘degenerated’ (pp. 14–15).<sup>46</sup> The English were like the Israelites who had sinned in failing to be vigilant enough against God’s enemies and so they had been punished. Temple’s message was clear enough: the lesson history has taught the English is that they must refuse to be misled by the temptations of toleration. Instead, they must police the Irish Catholics with vigilance and caution (p. 54). *The Irish Rebellion* had a massive influence on subsequent history, remaining in print until the nineteenth century. Works such as John Milton’s *Observations upon the Articles of Peace with the Irish Rebels* (1649) relied heavily on Temple’s version of events in the earlier 1640s, as well as his understanding of the dynamics of Irish history, for its hostile assessment of Irish Catholicism.<sup>47</sup> Oliver Cromwell’s notorious massacre of the besieged inhabitants of Drogheda (11 September 1649) was defended on the grounds that he was doing no more than the Irish had done to the English, a judgement also based in part on a reading of Temple.<sup>48</sup> Within Ireland, Temple’s history played a crucial role in defining the nature of Irish Protestantism.<sup>49</sup>

Temple’s *The Irish Rebellion* shows how a polarized sense of Irish history was always available to those who wished to employ it, and that certain divisions, essentially those between the English Christian and the Irish barbarian, could be easily deployed. Of course, not all history writing in Ireland conformed to this model, even if it conceived of itself within the same binary structure. Gerard Boate’s *Ireland’s Natural History* (1652) was the most extensive work on the natural resources of Ireland produced in the seventeenth century and was reprinted a number of times up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Boate, a Dutch physician who died in 1650 soon after he came to Ireland to establish himself as a landowner (the work was published posthumously by Samuel Hartlib, the great polymath who had a keen interest in science), had composed the work based on the observations of his brother, Arnold, a soldier who fought in Cromwell’s army.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Modern discussions dispute the numbers killed; see James Scott Wheeler, *Cromwell in Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1999), 226; Canny, *Making Ireland British*, ch. 8.

<sup>47</sup> John Milton, *Observations upon the Articles of the Peace* (1649), in Merritt Y. Hughes (ed.), *Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, Vol. 3 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 259–334.

<sup>48</sup> See Canny, *Making Ireland British*, ch. 9.

<sup>49</sup> Gillespie, ‘Temple’s Fate’, 315–33.

<sup>50</sup> On Boate, see *DNB* entry; T. C. Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland: English Government and Reform in Ireland, 1649–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), ch. 8, esp. 214–15, 234–7.

*Ireland's Natural History* is, as might be expected, a detailed survey of Ireland's natural resources and contains informative chapters describing the variety of bogs, woods, mines, rivers, lakes, types of land, climate, and so on. However, the exercise was not performed purely in the interests of objective science, despite the involvement of Hartlib, whatever the book's undoubted value as survey. Hartlib dedicated the book to Cromwell and his co-commander of the army in Ireland, Charles Fleetwood.<sup>51</sup> The preface makes clear that the information the Boate brothers have garnered is for the use of the English settlers—not the native Irish—who are responsible for all the improvements made to Ireland since the conquest in the twelfth century, including the monumental task of civilizing the Irish (sig. A7<sup>v</sup>), a conclusion that Sir John Temple would have had little trouble in endorsing. Conquering nature, the laudable goal announced in the prefatory letter to the two generals, also involved conquering the Irish, showing that Irish history written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was never produced outside polemical conflict.

<sup>51</sup> On Fleetwood, see *DNB* entry; Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland*, passim.

# Historical Writing, 1660–1750

*Bernadette Cunningham*

The growth in the availability of books on Irish history in the century after 1660 can be explained in a general way as being part of the expansion of print culture in both Britain and Ireland.<sup>1</sup> Many more printed works in English on Irish historical topics were available to readers in 1750 than had been the case in 1660. It seems clear that the growing market among the affluent gentry for Irish historical works was not limited to Ireland. Many of the historical works about Ireland published in English in this period had English as well as Irish subscribers, were distributed through English as well as Irish booksellers, or were printed in London rather than in Dublin. Yet, history writing about Ireland was distinctive, of course, not only in terms of the specifics of the subject matter but also because of particular Irish preoccupations about how the past was portrayed. These concerns about how the past should be presented owed their origins to political and cultural tensions not directly paralleled in England. Despite the distinctiveness of their subject matter, and their particular perspective on the past, those authors whose historical works about Ireland were printed in English between 1660 and 1750 drew to a very significant extent on English rather than Irish historiographical traditions. Many authors writing in English about the Irish past for the print market were acutely aware of non-Irish, and particularly English, audiences and Irish historians regularly addressed English readers in the prefaces of their books.<sup>2</sup> Protestant as well as Catholic authors were concerned that Irish affairs had been ‘so strangely represented abroad, especially in England’.<sup>3</sup>

By the late seventeenth century the world of Irish history had moved away from one in which professionally employed historians with access to and expertise in manuscript sources in the Irish language were sustained by aristocratic patronage, to one where English-speaking gentlemen at some

<sup>1</sup> D. R. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Cox, Walter Harris, Charles Smith, and others as discussed later.

<sup>3</sup> Hugh Reily, *Ireland's Case, Briefly Stated: or a Summary Account of the Most Remarkable Transactions in that Kingdom since the Reformation* ([Louvain or Paris], 1695, ESTC R182561), preface.

remove from the older manuscript sources virtually monopolized access to print.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the move from manuscript to print and from Irish to English language writing in seventeenth-century Ireland coincided with a fundamental change in the nature and purpose of Irish historical writing.

Printed works in Latin also continued to attract readers of Irish history at home and abroad, and those who read or collected historical books about Ireland would not normally have confined their interest to works in English.<sup>5</sup> Indeed they would not necessarily have confined themselves to printed works, but would have sought access to manuscript copies of works not available in print.<sup>6</sup> In particular, historical works in the Irish language continued to circulate exclusively in manuscript, for reasons that were part cultural and part economic.<sup>7</sup> Given the urban focus of the market for printed works, and the growing dominance of English in the towns, it appears that the demand for editions of historical works in Irish was not sufficient to make them commercially viable. Even an author like Hugh MacCurtin, whose normal scholarly language was Irish, chose English when writing for the print market. Likewise, Geoffrey Keating's influential general history of Ireland found a London publisher in 1723 for a version in English translation while the Irish language version continued to circulate exclusively in manuscript down to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Language was not the real issue. It is evident that a certain discontinuity in terms of the subject matter of Irish historical writing coincided with the transition from Irish to English and from manuscript to print, a discontinuity not explained entirely by Protestant dominance of the print market.<sup>8</sup> Rather, it appears that the English language print culture drew its inspiration from and was primarily modelled on the print culture of England and to a lesser extent of Scotland. Those who wrote about Ireland for the print market were addressing readers who were part of a culture of learning in which the traditions of Gaelic historical scholarship were marginalized. One exception to this generalization appears to have been the almanac trade. *Bourk's Almanack, 1685: Hiberniae Merlinus for the year of our Lord 1685*, for instance, provided readers with 'An exact Catalogue of the Irish Kings from the first planting

<sup>4</sup> Katharine Simms, 'Charles Lynegar, the Ó Luín family and the Study of Seanchas', in T. C. Barnard, Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, and Katharine Simms (eds.), *A Miracle of Learning: Studies in Manuscripts and Irish Learning. Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 277.

<sup>5</sup> Roderick O'Flaherty's *Ogygia* (London, 1685, ESTC R3105) is one example.

<sup>6</sup> The case of Arthur Annesley as historian and collector of books and manuscripts is one example. William Nicolson's *Irish Historical Library* (Dublin, 1724, ESTC T57517) provided an overview of the historical literature of the period that dealt with works 'in print or manuscript' (title page).

<sup>7</sup> By far the most popular historical narrative in circulation was Geoffrey Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*. Bernadette Cunningham, *The World of Geoffrey Keating: History, Myth and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 173–82.

<sup>8</sup> For the case of Hugh Reily and the writing of Catholic history see Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 102–7; see also pp. 278–9 of this chapter.



of Christianity in this nation' that ultimately derived from the Irish manuscript tradition.<sup>9</sup> In Bourk's judgment, this was the kind of history that would attract buyers for his almanac. In this instance however, the material may have been mediated through Sir James Ware's Irish history, printed in Latin, rather than being drawn directly from an Irish manuscript source.<sup>10</sup> As such it is a reminder that the development of a print culture may have lessened the significance of linguistic and cultural boundaries. However, it remains true that, although there were exceptions, most Irish historical writing in English printed in the century before 1750 owed little to traditional Gaelic historical scholarship.<sup>11</sup> This essay will survey the historical works printed in the period under consideration and assess how the world of print influenced Irish historical writing.

## Settlers and Their Histories

Gentlemen from the settler community seeking to create connections to their recently acquired Irish homes, mapping them, and seeking to understand their history, formed a significant element of those who collected, read, and compiled historical works about Ireland in the late seventeenth century. The will of Arthur Brownlow (d. 1711), the descendant of a settler in County Armagh, made particular mention of 'my few books either printed or manuscript', which he bequeathed to his eldest son. In so far as it can be reconstructed, his collection reveals Brownlow's desire to understand something of the history and geography of his new homeland.<sup>12</sup> Brownlow was prepared to overcome cultural and linguistic barriers in his pursuit of the past and collected Irish language manuscripts. Other families, too, assembled histories of their families and their local world. The Ulster families of Montgomery, Hamilton, and Savage all felt it necessary to document their historical origins.

<sup>9</sup> John Bourk, *Bourks Almanack, 1685: Hiberniae Merlinus for the Year of Our Lord 1685* (Dublin, 1685, ESTC R170116), sig. a5.

<sup>10</sup> James Ware, *De Hibernia et Antiquitatibus eius Disquisitiones* (London, 1654, 2nd edn., 1658, ESTC R13244; R204005).

<sup>11</sup> Even the major exception to this generalization, Geoffrey Keating's *General History of Ireland* (London and Dublin, 1723, ESTC T122585; ESTC T121242) had engaged extensively with English and Scottish printed works as well as with the Irish manuscript tradition. See Cunningham, *World of Geoffrey Keating*, 83–101.

<sup>12</sup> PRONI, D.1928/L/1/13B; Brownlow's will is printed in Raymond Gillespie (ed.), *Settlement and Survival on an Ulster Estate: The Brownlow Leasebook, 1667–1711* (Belfast: PRONI, 1988), 161–3. For a reconstruction of Brownlow's manuscript library see Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, 'An Ulster Settler and his Irish Manuscripts', *Éigse*, 21 (1986), 27–36. The source texts he collected, which cast light on the early history of the Armagh area, were necessarily in the Irish language. Having visited Brownlow, Thomas Molyneux noted that he 'has by him several old Irish manuscripts which he can read and understand very well' (R. M. Young (ed.), *Notices of Old Belfast and its Vicinity* (Belfast: Marcus Ward, 1896), 154).

Written for and by a small circle of family and friends, these works helped families come to terms with the new environment in which they found themselves. The circulation of such texts was probably limited to the family circle. It mattered little whether the history existed in manuscript or in print; most were not printed until the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

At a more consciously scholarly level, though still focusing on local society, Walter Harris and Charles Smith together worked to produce a series of histories of Irish counties. Their research on County Down, issued in 1744, emphasized their concern to use history to demonstrate that Ireland was 'no less worth inquiring into, than other Countries that have employed the Attention of the Studious'. With an eye to the wider world of print they modelled their scheme on 'the Views that have been given of some Counties in England'.<sup>14</sup> They claimed for their work the 'laudable View of taking off the Veil that has long lain upon this Country, and for removing those Mistakes and Misrepresentations, that have been handed down from remote Times, and are yet admitted as Truths among those who have published of late years the Present State of Ireland'.<sup>15</sup> That there was demand for their efforts is clear from the 503 subscribers who supported Charles Smith's work on County Waterford in 1746.<sup>16</sup> The scheme of work outlined by the Physico-Historical Society in their *Proposals For Collecting Materials For Publishing The Antient and Present State Of the Several Counties of Ireland in Descriptions Natural, Civil, Ecclesiastical, Historical, Chorographical Etc* (1745)<sup>17</sup> indicates that history was but a minor element of their overall concerns to present Ireland in a favourable light.

## Partisan Political Narratives

For other writers, however, Irish history, and more especially the history of post-1641 Ireland, was a matter of great and continuing significance. The rising of 1641 and its aftermath marked the beginning of an increasingly

<sup>13</sup> T. K. Lowry (ed.), *The Hamilton Manuscripts* (Belfast: Archer and Sons, 1867); George Hill (ed.), *The Montgomery Manuscripts* (Belfast: Archer and Sons, 1869); G. F. Savage-Armstrong, *A Genealogical History of the Savage Family in Ulster* (London: Chiswick Press, 1906); see Raymond Gillespie, 'The Making of the Montgomery Manuscripts', *Familia*, 2 (2) (1986), 23–9.

<sup>14</sup> [Charles Smith and Walter Harris], *The Antient and Present State of the County of Down* (Dublin, 1744, ESTC T144670), sig. a[1]v.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, sigs. a[1]v–a[2]; p. vi. Smith and Harris's book was dedicated to Sir Hans Sloane, president of the Royal Society, London. The work of which they were critical was probably Guy Miège, *The Present State of Great-Britain and Ireland, in three parts . . . Containing an Accurate and Impartial Account of these Famous Islands* (9th edn., London, 1742, ESTC N20851). First published in 1707, part 3 of this gazetteer, with a brief historical introduction, was devoted to Ireland.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Smith, *The Antient and Present State of the City and County of Waterford* (Dublin, 1746, ESTC T97660).

<sup>17</sup> RIA, HT Box 200, no. 8 (ESTC T2215064).

partisan approach to Irish historical writing. John Temple's *The Irish Rebellion*, first published in London in 1646, was the first Protestant account of these events, and it had a lasting impact on Irish historical writing. This controversial work quickly established itself as the standard Protestant account of the massacres that had occurred during the 1641 rebellion in Ireland. Its significance was not merely that it coloured how contemporary history was written thereafter; by being adapted by other writers keen to emphasize the untrustworthiness of Irish Catholics the book itself became an actor in subsequent controversies. It was reissued regularly at times of heightened political tension.<sup>18</sup>

In contrast to the persistent demand for copies of Temple's deeply sectarian work, the more moderate Protestant account of the same events compiled by Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon (1609–74), circulated entirely in manuscript before eventually being published in London in 1720.<sup>19</sup> However, the content was already available at one remove because Edmund Borlase's *History of the Irish Rebellion*, which had been available in print in Dublin from 1680, made extensive use of Clarendon's material.<sup>20</sup> A second edition of Borlase was published by subscription in 1743.<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, the two major narratives of the 1640s in Ireland from contrasting Irish Catholic perspectives remained unpublished until the late nineteenth century. Richard Bellings's narrative of the period 1641 to 1649, written in 1673–4, aimed to demonstrate the political distinctiveness of the Catholic Old English. Bellings was keen to counteract the efforts of Protestant politicians and historians who regarded Irish Catholics without distinction.<sup>22</sup> It was rumoured in 1674 that his work was being prepared for print at Douai, but no edition appeared. Instead the author arranged for it to be circulated in manuscript. At least four manuscript copies were still in his own possession at the time of his death.<sup>23</sup> The anonymous author of the text now known as the

<sup>18</sup> The account of the 1641 rebellion in Nathaniel Crouch's popular chapbooks drew extensively on Temple's *Irish Rebellion*. For discussion of the role of Temple's book see T. C. Barnard, '“Parlour Entertainment in an Evening”? Histories of the 1640s', in Micheál Ó Siochrú (ed.), *Kingdoms in Crisis: Ireland in the 1640s* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 20–43; Raymond Gillespie, 'Temple's Fate: Reading *The Irish Rebellion* in Late Seventeenth-Century Ireland', in Ciaran Brady and Jane Ohlmeier (eds.), *British Interventions in Early Modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 315–33. Even as late as 1766 an edition of Temple's *Irish Rebellion* attracted 856 subscribers.

<sup>19</sup> Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in Ireland* (London, 1720, ESTC T53950).

<sup>20</sup> T. W. Moody, 'Introduction: Early Modern Ireland', in T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin, and F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, III: Early Modern Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. lviii.

<sup>21</sup> Edmund Borlase, *History of the Irish Rebellion*, 2nd edn. (Dublin, 1743, ESTC T139783).

<sup>22</sup> Bellings's narrative survives in two manuscripts, TCD, MS 747 and BL, Add. MS 4763, ff. 36–89, continued by BL, Add. MS 4819, ff. 399–438; the latter is an expanded annotated version owned by the Earl of Anglesea. It was published in J. T. Gilbert (ed.), *History of the Irish Confederation and the War in Ireland*, 7 vols. (Dublin, 1882–91).

<sup>23</sup> NLI, MS 11060, no. 25, cited in Raymond Gillespie, 'The Social Thought of Richard Bellings', in Ó Siochrú (ed.), *Kingdoms in Crisis*, 214.

'Aphorismical Discovery of Treasonable Faction' wrote about the 1640s from the perspective of an Ulster Catholic, but it too remained unpublished until the late nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> John Curry's *Brief Account . . . of the Irish Rebellion* provided an anonymous Catholic critique of Protestant authors over the previous century when it was printed in London in 1747. Its publication was politically inspired being 'written during the late Rebellion in Scotland, in Vindication of the Roman Catholics of Ireland against whom . . . many false, and scurrilous libels were then published'.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to general narratives of the wars of the 1640s, from both Catholic and Protestant perspectives, personal memoirs of these events formed another significant genre of near contemporary history where partisan versions of recent events were published. It was usually a family member or close associate who edited the selected correspondence or memoirs of a prominent political personality whose career had been shaped by those events. The compiler of *A Collection of the State Letters of the Right Honourable Roger Boyle, the first earl of Orrery* (2 vols., Dublin, 1743) was conscious that his work was one of a series of similar collections of historical documentation that had emerged from the upheavals of the 1640s in Ireland. He made specific mention of the Appendices to Thomas Carte's *Life of Ormond*, the Earl of Strafford's *Letters and Dispatches*, and Thurloe's *State Letters* as compilations of source material that were 'greatly contributing towards an insight and digestion of that rude chaos'.<sup>26</sup> After the heat of contemporary political concerns had subsided, the primary objective of the compilers may have been to enhance the status of the families of leading political personalities. Such was certainly the case for *Memoirs of the Marquis of Clanricarde*, published in 1722 largely for a non-Irish readership.<sup>27</sup> The subscription list was dominated by names of those resident in England. The bookseller with one of the largest orders—for 16 copies—was based at the genteel town of Bath, a resort popular with Irish as well as English gentry. The first edition of *The Memoir's of James Lord Audley Earl of Castlehaven, his Engagement and Carriage in the Wars of Ireland, from the Year 1642 to*

<sup>24</sup> J. T. Gilbert (ed.), *A Contemporary History of Affairs in Ireland from A.D. 1641–1652*, 3 vols. (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1879).

<sup>25</sup> [John Curry], *A Brief Account from the Most Authentic Protestant Writers of the Causes, Motives, and Mischiefs, of the Irish Rebellion* (London, 1747, ESTC T64962), 1.

<sup>26</sup> *A Collection of the State Letters of the Right Honourable Roger Boyle, the First Earl of Orrery* (2 vols., Dublin, 1743 ESTC T145244), preface, iii; Thomas Carte, *An History of the Life of James, Duke of Ormonde, . . . an Account of the Most Remarkable Affairs of his Time, and Particularly of Ireland under his Government*, 2 vols. (London, 1736, ESTC T152001); John Thurloe, *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Containing Authentic Memorials of the English Affairs from the Year 1638 to the Restoration of King Charles II* (7 vols., London, 1742, ESTC N66502); William Knowler (ed.), *The Earl of Strafforde's Letters and Dispatches*, 2 vols., (Dublin, 1740, ESTC T110679). R. C. Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740–1800* (London: Mansell, 1986), 227, states that Orrery's book attracted 243 subscribers.

<sup>27</sup> *Memoirs of the Right Honourable the Marquis of Clanricarde, Lord Deputy of Ireland . . . Publish'd from his Lordship's Original MSS* (London, 1722, ESTC T143709).

*the Year 1651* (London, 1680) was dedicated to the King, but when reissued four years later, the dedication and preface were omitted, the book having been judged by Charles II in 1682 as ‘a scandalous libel against the Government’.<sup>28</sup> Castlehaven stated specifically that he produced his work in reaction to the books he saw on sale in London which discussed his personal role in the 1641 rebellion.<sup>29</sup> The work was later reissued as *The Earl of Castlehaven’s Memoirs, or his Review Of the Late Wars of Ireland, with his own Engagement and Conduct therein* (Waterford, 1753), but with a very limited number of ‘not above 50’ subscribers, an intimate circle whom the publisher felt it unnecessary to name. Despite their relatively limited circulation, these memoirs and collections of correspondence were the most likely works to be available in gentry libraries. Their accessibility in print meant that they provided the foundation on which later narratives could build. The effect was cumulative. Apart from Castlehaven’s memoirs, the published accounts were predominantly the work of the Protestant elite, and for Catholics they reinforced awareness that the world of print was dominated by Protestant versions of recent events. It may have been this realization that prompted Richard Bellings to identify print as a destabilizing force in society.<sup>30</sup> The world of print offered real if divisive and unpalatable evidence of who had been the losers in the upheavals of seventeenth-century Ireland. The availability of partisan historical works facilitated by print helped reinforce Protestant dominance by shaping historical memory. It allowed Protestant perceptions of deliverance from Catholics in 1641 and 1691 to become established as part of the official calendar of history, and to be fed into sectarian tensions at times of political crisis.<sup>31</sup>

## Transition from Irish to English Historical Writing

Even before the historiographical watershed of 1641, Irish historical writing had moved away from annalistic chronicle towards narrative with a moral or polemical purpose.<sup>32</sup> Whereas the annals had been the product of an essentially cohesive and confident Gaelic polity, presenting a record of the past that did not overtly imply a revision of opposing accounts, the bulk of seventeenth-century narrative histories of Ireland tended to be couched in terms

<sup>28</sup> Manuscript note on verso of title page of RIA copy of 1680 edition (RIA, MR 16 M 15, which was owned by Isaac Ward in 1681; ESTC R4054).

<sup>29</sup> *The Memoirs of James Lord Audley Earl of Castlehaven his Engagement and Carriage in the Wars of Ireland* (London, 1680, ESTC R4054), address to the reader.

<sup>30</sup> Gillespie, ‘Social Thought of Richard Bellings’, 214.

<sup>31</sup> T. C. Barnard, ‘The Uses of 23 October 1641 and Irish Protestant Celebrations’, *English Historical Review*, 106 (1991), 889–920.

<sup>32</sup> Simms, ‘Charles Lynegar, the Ó Luinín Family and the Study of Seanchas’, 266–85, argues that the annals had not been history with a moral purpose.

of opposites where 'false' histories had to be countered by a 'true' version. For some, the purpose of the new kind of narrative history was to justify confessional allegiances. In the early seventeenth century, the work of the Catholic historian Geoffrey Keating and that of the prolific Protestant scholar James Ussher displayed a strong element of religious polemic underlying the historical narrative. For both, historical argument was central to the controversy over the true Christian church.<sup>33</sup> Other Irish writers turned to history in defence of the honour of their people.<sup>34</sup> The undeservedly poor reputation of Ireland and the need to refute hostile authors who denigrated the Irish people was a recurring theme in the prefaces to works of Irish history from Geoffrey Keating to Richard Cox, Walter Harris, and beyond. The absence of a major narrative history of Ireland in print, such as other countries had, was sorely felt. Whereas Scotland had several major narrative histories published during the sixteenth century by Hector Boece, John Mair, and George Buchanan,<sup>35</sup> and England had found its major historian in William Camden whose mammoth work *Britannia* was frequently reissued,<sup>36</sup> Ireland even in 1700 lacked a printed work offering an acceptable narrative history of Ireland from antiquity to the present. Although William Nicolson described Sir James Ware as 'the Camden of Ireland' the comparison was not quite apposite, and Nicolson himself appears to have relied primarily on Geoffrey Keating and Roderick O'Flaherty rather than Ware. That he chose to do so emphasizes Nicolson's inclination to attach particular value to historians who cited Irish language sources, even if his own ability to engage directly with those same sources was limited.<sup>37</sup> A history of Ireland that could claim to be authoritative would require to be rooted in manuscript sources in the Irish language.

<sup>33</sup> R. Buick Knox, *James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967); J. Th. Leerssen, 'Archbishop Ussher and Gaelic Culture', *Studia Hibernica*, 22–3 (1982–3), 50–8; Alan Ford, 'James Ussher and the Creation of an Irish Protestant Identity', in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds.), *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533–1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 185–212.

<sup>34</sup> Colin Kidd, 'Gaelic Antiquity and National Identity in Enlightenment Ireland and Scotland', *English Historical Review*, 109 (1994), 1197–214.

<sup>35</sup> Hector Boece, *Scotorum Historiae* (Paris, 1526; Lausanne, 1574 etc.); John Mair, *Historia Majoris Britanniae tam Angliae quam Scotiae* (Paris, 1521); George Buchanan, *De Rerum Scotticarum Historia* (Antwerp, 1582).

<sup>36</sup> First published in Latin in 1586, Camden's work was issued in English translation in 1610 with further editions appearing regularly. The edition in circulation at the beginning of the eighteenth century was a lavish production published by Edmund Gibson and designed to enhance the library of any gentleman that could afford it. *Camden's Britannia, Newly Translated into English with ... Additions and Improvements* (London, 1695, ESTC R12882). The subscription price advertised in 1693 was 32s, or 50s for large paper copies. See Gwyn Walters, 'Bibliographical note', prefacing 1971 facsimile reprint of *Camden's Britannia, 1695: A Facsimile of the 1695 Edition Published by Edmund Gibson* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1971). Gibson's edition was reissued in two volumes in 1722.

<sup>37</sup> Nicolson, *The Irish Historical Library*, 20, and *passim*.

The skills needed to interpret manuscript sources in the Irish language had declined rapidly in the course of the seventeenth century because of the lack of scholarly patronage. Such new texts as were being produced in Irish tended to be transcripts of existing manuscripts rather than new works and, of these, Geoffrey Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, originally completed c.1634, was the most frequently copied text. In a cultural context where English had become the language of scholarship, any historical source in the Irish language posed a challenge. English-speaking historians who wished to use Irish primary sources faced difficulties of both physical and intellectual access. Even for Irish speakers the difficulty of reading manuscripts in old or middle Irish was acknowledged. Tadhg Ó Rodaighe admitted in correspondence with the Welsh antiquary Edward Lhuyd in 1700 that 'I have several volumes that none in the world can now peruse, though within 20 yeares there lived three or four that could read and understand them all'.<sup>38</sup> Ó Rodaighe added that he had 30 books of Gaelic law, and noted that 'my honoured friend, Sir Richard Cox, was once of opinion that our law was arbitrary, and not fixed or written, till I satisfied him to the contrary in Summer, 1699, by shewing him some of the said lawe books'.<sup>39</sup> Viewing Irish scholarship from an external perspective, antiquaries like Edward Lhuyd and Thomas Molyneux could perceive the discontinuity in Irish historical scholarship between the Irish language manuscript tradition and the English-speaking world of print. Indeed, Lhuyd's concern with compiling dictionaries and other tools to support scholarly research was evidence of his awareness of the barriers to historical scholarship created by language differences.

The authors and the historical texts that succeeded in bridging the divide between English/Irish, urban/rural, and print/manuscript cultures were the exception rather than the rule. The most influential work to make the transition from Irish to English and from scribal to print publication was Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*. A narrative history of Ireland from earliest times to the coming of the Normans, *Foras Feasa* enjoyed unrivalled popularity among readers of Irish when it circulated widely in manuscript in the seventeenth century. From the start it crossed language boundaries with an English language translation being made by Michael Kearney in 1635. Other English translations were in circulation by the 1670s, while one aspiring Protestant writer, Thomas Harte, endeavoured to use Keating's narrative as the basis for two of the three sections of his own English version of Irish history.<sup>40</sup> The number of English translations in circulation in the late seventeenth

<sup>38</sup> J. H. Todd (ed.), 'Autograph letter of Thady O'Roddy, *Miscellany of the Irish Archaeological Society*, 1 (Dublin, 1846), 123, cited in Simms, 'Charles Lynegar, the Ó Luinin Family and the Study of Seanchas', 277.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Versions of Harte's work survive in two manuscripts: NLI, MS G 292, and RIA, MS 24 G 15.

century, together with the flurry of activity in the early eighteenth century by rival scholars who sought to be first into print with an English edition, point to the demand for Keating's work among readers of English. The appearance in print of Peter Walsh's *Prospect of the State of Ireland* (1682) contributed significantly to creating the climate in which there was demand for Keating's work to be made available in English and in print.<sup>41</sup> Walsh had drawn extensively on John Lynch's *Cambrensis Eversus*, which he had read when it was first published in 1662, and an English translation of Keating's *Foras Feasa* given to him by the Earl of Anglesea in the 1670s. Walsh commented that he would have liked to consult other published seventeenth-century historical writings about Ireland but had to settle for Lynch and Keating because 'I could by no means procure the reading of Primate Ussher's *Primordia Ecclesiarum Britannicarum*, or Sir James Ware's *Antiquities of Ireland*'.<sup>42</sup> Walsh quoted extensively in English from Keating's work, thereby helping to bring the work to the notice of a wider circle of readers than would have had access to manuscript versions.

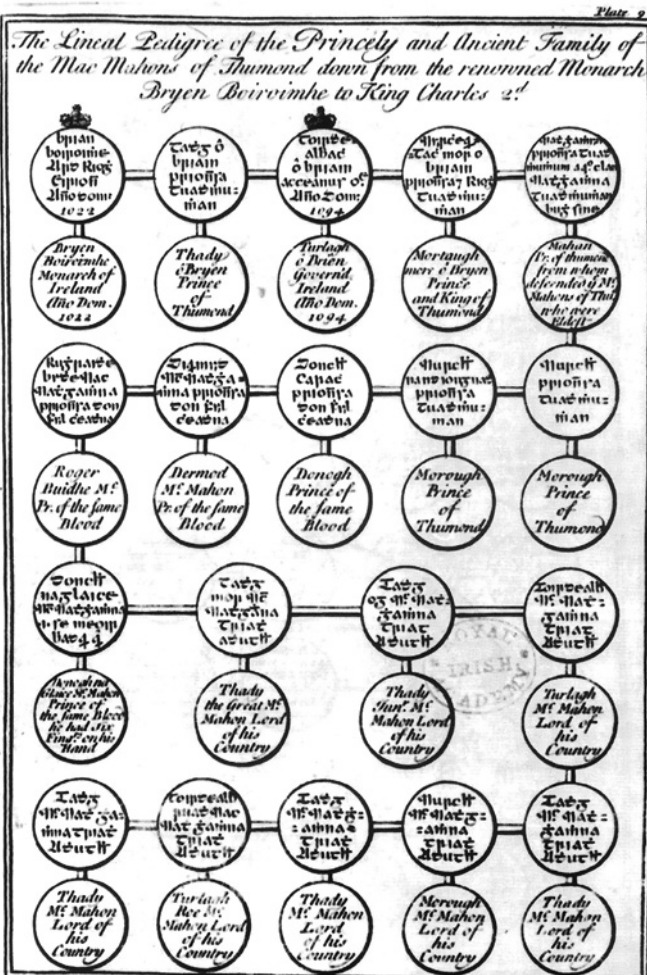
The publication of *Ogygia*, by the Catholic scholar Roderick O'Flaherty (who chose Latin rather than English for his major published work), also drew attention to the value of Keating's history, though simultaneously criticizing Peter Walsh's efforts. Thus, at a time when the world of the hereditary historian of Gaelic Ireland was fast disappearing, together with the aristocratic patronage they had enjoyed, traditional Irish historical scholarship was occasionally promoted through the publication of partially derivative works in English and Latin. The researches of Edward Lhuyd and Thomas Molyneux at the turn of the eighteenth century uncovered some links with the world of Gaelic scholarship, but they were also made acutely aware of the discontinuities that had arisen. Impressed by the scholarship of Roderick O'Flaherty, whose *Ogygia* had attracted considerable attention when published in London in 1685, Molyneux visited O'Flaherty, expecting 'to have seen here some old Irish manuscripts, but his ill-fortune has stripped him of these as well as his other goods, so that he has nothing now left but a few pieces of his own writing, and a few old rummish books of history, printed'.<sup>43</sup> Although *Ogygia* had a significant readership in Britain, and prompted a reply by Sir George Mackenzie in defence of the antiquity of the Scottish monarchy, the Gaelic cultural and social environment that had sustained

<sup>41</sup> Peter Walsh (c.1618–88), a politically active Irish Franciscan who had spent much of the 1650s in political exile abroad, himself wrote a book entitled 'Hibernica', which is not extant. *DNB*, s.n.

<sup>42</sup> Peter Walsh, *A Prospect of the State of Ireland from the Year of the World 1576 to the Year of Christ 1652* ([London], 1682, ESTC R34713), sigs. a1v–a2.

<sup>43</sup> J. C. Beckett, 'Literature in English, 1691–1800', in T. W. Moody and W. E. Vaughan (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, IV: Eighteenth-Century Ireland, 1691–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 467; *DNB*, s.n.; Nollaig Ó Muraíle, 'Aspects of the Intellectual Life of Seventeenth-Century Galway', in Gerard Moran (ed.), *Galway, History and Society* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1996), 182–96.





11. Genealogy of Bryen Mac Mahon, from Geoffrey Keating, *A General History of Ireland* (1732). Dermot O'Connor prepared customized genealogical charts for special subscribers to the various editions of his English version of Keating's *A General History of Ireland*, a scheme that proved very successful as a marketing device, offering readers a way of linking their own family directly into the story of Ireland's illustrious past.

O'Flaherty's scholarship was disintegrating. O'Flaherty himself was a transitional figure, writing his major historical work in Latin. When replying to Mackenzie's objections, O'Flaherty chose English as the language in which to communicate his views. However, the reply remained unpublished until rescued by the Connacht antiquary Charles O'Connor almost a century later, in 1775.<sup>44</sup>

At a more popular and polemical level Hugh MacCurtin's *Brief Discourse in Vindication of the Antiquity of Ireland* (1717) provided readers of English with an affordable narrative history of Ireland derived from Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*. The *Brief Discourse* was published by subscription, and although most subscribers had Gaelic surnames MacCurtin's work was intended for readers of English. MacCurtin straddled two overlapping cultural worlds, at home with both languages and pragmatic in making choices appropriate to his intended audiences.<sup>45</sup> By 1717, however, plans were probably well advanced, within a circle of scholars MacCurtin would have known, to print the full text of Keating's history in English translation. Anthony Raymond worked diligently on just such a project for several years, but when Keating's history was eventually printed in English in 1723, as *The General History of Ireland*, it was the somewhat unscrupulous Dermot O'Connor who had won the race into print.<sup>46</sup> Despite the controversy among rival translators, and the intervention of individuals who opposed its publication, the venture appears to have been a commercial success. Separate London and Dublin editions were issued in the same year. As a history that began with the creation of the world, it was essentially an origin legend of the Irish people. Part of the attraction for subscribers was the elaborate genealogical information about the families of subscribers provided as an appendix to the volume. This proved a clever marketing device, one that was the envy of others (see Figure 11).<sup>47</sup> *The General History of Ireland* was a large and expensive work, yet within three years there was sufficient demand to justify a new edition. The second edition contained additional material by Anthony Raymond and an attack by the printer, B. Creak, on the unscrupulousness of the editor, O'Connor.<sup>48</sup> A reissue of the first edition followed in 1732, and a third edition in 1738. The publication of Keating's history was

<sup>44</sup> *Ogygia Vindicated Against the Objections of Sir George Mackenzie*, ed. Charles O'Connor (Dublin, 1775, ESTCT186397).

<sup>45</sup> Vincent Morley, *An Crann os Coill: Aodh Bui Mac Cruitín, c.1680–1755* (Dublin: Coiscéim, 1995); Cunningham, *World of Geoffrey Keating*, 212–15.

<sup>46</sup> Diarmaid Ó Catháin, 'Dermot O'Connor, Translator of Keating', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 2 (1987), 68–87; Alan Harrison, *Ag Cruinniú Meala: Anthony Raymond, 1675–1726, Ministéir Protastúnach, agus Léann na Gaeilge i mBaile Átha Cliath* (Dublin: An Clóchomhar, 1988).

<sup>47</sup> Nicolson, *Irish Historical Library*, 50.

<sup>48</sup> *The General History of Ireland, Collected by the Learned Jeoffry Keating* (2nd edn. London, 1726, ESTCT122588), appendix, xv.

a significant milestone; it facilitated the integration of traditional Gaelic historical scholarship into eighteenth-century print culture in Ireland. It laid the foundations for later antiquarian researches and helped meet the scholarly demand for an acceptable version of the Irish origin myth already popularized for the print market in almanacs.

Taking up where Keating left off, but writing from a very different political standpoint, Richard Cox's *Hibernia Anglicana* (1689) presented readers with a narrative account of Irish history from the coming of the Normans. Cox voiced open hostility towards historians from the Gaelic tradition.<sup>49</sup> He scoffed at the stories of Irish origins incorporated in Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, and in the Book of Invasions, criticizing 'those ridiculous stories which they have published of the Fir Bolgs and Tuah-de-danans'.<sup>50</sup> Although he was conscious of the shortcomings of his own effort, being based entirely on recent secondary sources, he was reluctant to admit that Keating's *Foras Feasa*, which drew on a wide range of Irish language manuscript sources, was anything other than 'an ill-digested heap of very silly fictions'.<sup>51</sup> This perception persisted despite Cox's earlier recommendation that Keating's was the best history of Ireland before the conquest.<sup>52</sup> Richard Cox had apparently been alerted to Keating's works through his reading of extensive extracts from it in Peter Walsh's *Prospect of the State of Ireland*. When Cox was working on his own version of the Irish past in the late 1680s he had a manuscript copy of an English translation of Keating's history on loan from Sir Robert Southwell.<sup>53</sup> Cox's concern to consult Keating in manuscript reveals that there was recognition of the value of Irish Catholic historical writing even among English-speaking Protestant authors and readers. Cox considered that an entire and coherent history of Ireland would be 'very useful to the people of England, and the Refugees of Ireland'.<sup>54</sup> He presented his work as the history of one of the 'principal islands of the world', which did not deserve to 'find no room in history'. In particular Cox noted that England, 'a Learned and Inquisitive Nation, skilful beyond comparison in the Histories of all other Countries, is nevertheless but very imperfectly informed in the Story of Ireland, though it be a Kingdom subordinate to England, and of the highest importance to it'.<sup>55</sup> Cox's history was published at a time of crisis for Irish Protestant settlers, but his message to readers was to take comfort from history, because the evidence of the past demonstrated the superiority of the English. Although 'the Irish Capacities are not to be questioned at this

<sup>49</sup> Richard Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana, or the History of Ireland from the Conquest Thereof by the English to this Present Time* (2 parts, London, 1689–90, ESTC R5067; R227138), introduction.

<sup>50</sup> Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, pt 1, sig. e2v.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., sig. b[1]v.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., sig. b[1].

<sup>53</sup> NLI, MS G 293, memorandum by Sir Robert Southwell on 2nd flyleaf, 'This booke was lent by Sir John Percivale to Mr Cox. And returned to Sir R. Southwell in London, March 1689/90'.

<sup>54</sup> Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana*, pt 1, sig. b[1]v.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., sig. b[1].

Day, since they have managed their Affairs with that dexterity and Courage, that they have gotten the whole Kingdom of Ireland into their Possession', Cox advised, 'let us not be dismayed, for they are but the same People our Ancestors have so often triumphed over . . . their nature is still the same, and not to be so changed, but that they will again vail their Bonnets to a victorious English Army.'<sup>56</sup>

## Cheap Histories with a Moral Purpose

Although most historical books discussed so far in this chapter were the work of gentry authors writing for people of similar social status—persons of some means who could afford the luxury of purchasing expensive printed books—there existed a wider market for historical works about Ireland. Among the authors and publishers who most effectively catered for the cheaper end of the market in Ireland as well as in England was Nathaniel Crouch. Writing under the pseudonym of 'R.B.', Richard/Robert Burton, he produced abridgments of well-known historical works in cheap chapbook format. Crouch was conscious that price was important. The preface to the illustrated fifth edition of *The Wars in England, Scotland and Ireland*, covering the period 1625 to 1660, made clear that it was 'intended for the use of those who cannot go to the price of a greater; and yet would willingly be informed of those wonderful Transactions and Revolutions which have happened in these three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland'.<sup>57</sup> Burton's simple narrative was presented as history with a moral purpose: 'Let us all therefore who pretend to the name of Christians, study to be quiet, and follow Peace with all men'.<sup>58</sup> Later, Crouch treated more recent historical events in his abridgment of George Story's *A True and Impartial History of the most Material Occurrences in the Kingdom of Ireland during the past two years*.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., sig. I[2]v; see also Jacqueline Hill, 'Politics and the Writing of History: The Impact of the 1690s and 1790s on Irish Historiography', in D. G. Boyce, R. Eccleshall, and V. Geoghegan (eds.), *Political Discourse in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 222–39; eadem, 'Popery and Protestantism, Civil and Religious Liberty: The Disputed Lessons of Irish History, 1690–1812', *Past and Present*, 118 (1988), 96–129.

<sup>57</sup> [Nathaniel Crouch] Richard Burton, *The Wars in England, Scotland and Ireland, or An Impartial Account of all the Battels, Sieges, and other Remarkable Transactions, Revolutions and Accidents, which have Happened From the Beginning of the Reign of King Charles I in 1625, to His Majesties happy Restauration, 1660*, 5th edn. (London, 1684) (ESTC R231054), sig. A3. A bestseller, first published in 1681, it was in its sixth edition by 1697.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., sig. A3v.

<sup>59</sup> Story's illustrated narrative was published in London in 1691 (ESTC R4615), whereas Crouch's abridgement, again using the pseudonym R.B. and entitled *The History of the Kingdom of Ireland . . . till the Entire Reduction of that Country by . . . King William*, was published in London in 1693 (ESTC R21153), complete with woodcut illustrations. It continued to be published into the nineteenth century, its appeal enhanced by the 'brief relation of the ancient inhabitants' that it provided.

Thus, although Story's expensively produced work found sufficient readers to justify a continuation volume two years later,<sup>60</sup> it was the 'Burton book' or chapbook version by Nathaniel Crouch that would have reached the widest audience. A corresponding text written from a Catholic perspective was Hugh Reily's *Ireland's Case, Briefly Stated*, printed at Louvain in 1695, and frequently reprinted thereafter in both Ireland and London as *The Impartial history of Ireland*. Reily's work focused on the idea that the government had used religion as the pretext to deprive Catholics of their land. It took comfort from the biblical parallels traceable in the idea of the Irish as a chosen people in a state of captivity. The portrayal of the behaviour of Protestants, as being grounded on a mistaken belief that they might be the chosen people, illustrated the deliberately partisan tone of the work.<sup>61</sup> Reily asserted that he was presenting the truth derived from 'authentic records', 'impartial memoirs', and 'living witnesses of quality and undoubted probity'. In this he was establishing a contrast with other authors by claiming that, with the exception of some passages in Sir John Davies's *Discovery of the true causes* (1612), 'those Protestants who went to settle in Ireland, and writ of what pass'd there either in their own time or before, especially since the Reformation, took all possible care to stifle or disguise the truth'.<sup>62</sup> Reily singled out Temple's 'Romantic legend of the Irish Rebellion' for particular criticism, but also attacked the polemical writings of William King, Bishop of Derry, arguing that in the case of Protestant authors 'their interest prompts them to play the devil in God's name'.<sup>63</sup>

Although writing from a Catholic perspective it is clear that Reily's work did not emanate from the world of traditional Gaelic scholarship. The sources he cited included a range of English works such as Richard Baker's *Chronicle* (1679), William Sanderson's *King James* (1655–6), the 1627 edition of Camden's *Britannia*, Francis Osborn's *Historical Memoires* (1658), and even Charles I's *Eikon Basilike*. He also cited a *Collection of Murders Committed upon the Irish* (1662), and a printed edition of the *Irish Statutes*. Reily's pointedly moralistic conclusion warned monarchs to 'avoid those who would persuade them to steer their course by any other compass', and advised that 'There is no better or safer rule of policy both for prince and people, than to deal justly and honestly with all the world'.<sup>64</sup> Niall Ó Ciosáin has argued that the kind of Catholic history printed in English by Hugh Reily was not the kind of Catholic history that was popular in rural Ireland. He draws attention to the appendices attached to later editions, issued under the title of *Impartial History of Ireland*, and with the running head 'The genuine history of Ireland', arguing that they related to issues of concern only to an elite section

<sup>60</sup> George Story, *A Continuation of the Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland* (London, 1693, ESTC R38294).

<sup>61</sup> Reily, *Ireland's Case* (1695); Hill, 'Politics and the Writing of History', 223–6.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, sigs. a3v–a4.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, sigs. a4v, p. 40.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 131.

of society. They included, for instance, Cornelius Nary's *Case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland* (1724), a work that dealt with issues of concern primarily to wealthier Catholics. The question of what was popular in rural Ireland is a complex one and it would be wrong to equate 'popular' with 'manuscript' tradition. It is doubtful whether there was ever a significant 'cheap' manuscript tradition in Irish—or a readership literate in Irish to support it. Manuscript ownership, no less than book ownership, was a privilege of the affluent. Further unanswered questions arise over the extent to which printed works were disseminated through rural society. One Limerick reprint of Reily's *Impartial History* advertised that it was 'Sold at Goggin's wholesale and retail little book ware-house, where the greatest encouragement is given to country dealers', but in reality the business of bookselling relied on an urban base.

## Guidance for Historical Reading

When William Nicolson came to compile his *Irish Historical Library* (1724) he was confident of a market for his book given the success of his previous volumes on England and Scotland. A book that was a summary guide to writings on Irish history was clearly the product of a world where an extensive range of works was available. Nicolson was at home in the world of expensive books and significant library collections. He ignored popular writers like Reily and Crouch, presumably on the grounds that he was not attempting a comprehensive list of published works but rather a selection of materials that would be useful to serious researchers interested in the Irish past. He also demonstrated a keen interest in manuscript collections and source texts from which more synthetic historical narratives could be compiled. Francis Hutchinson, Bishop of Down and Connor, in his *Defence of the Antient Historians* expressed his doubts about many of the sources mentioned by Nicolson and invited readers to bring to his attention such Irish sources as they knew of. Despite his interest, Hutchinson's skills in this field were limited enough. He noted that 'although I pretend not to understand much of the Language, yet I have several Books written in it, and am no stranger to it's Character and Alphabet; and I have friends that understand it well'.<sup>65</sup> By contrast, Nicolson was able to do reasonable justice to the authors whose Irish language works he discussed.

A weightier compendium than that of Nicolson was provided by Walter Harris in the 1760s in his reordering of Sir James Ware's works about Ireland.

<sup>65</sup> Francis [Hutchinson], *Defence of the Antient Historians with a Particular Application of it to the History of Ireland and Great-Britain* (Dublin, 1734, ESTC T99482), p. xiv.

An English translation of Ware's work had been published in Dublin in 1704–5.<sup>66</sup> That edition proved unsatisfactory to some readers. Walter Harris observed when reading Ware's *Bishops of Ireland* in translation that he 'found the Translator had very often mistaken that Writer's Sense, and perverted his Meaning, which I frequently marked with a Pen.'<sup>67</sup> Not satisfied with merely revising the translation for himself, Harris decided to substantially rewrite the text. To this end he 'set about searching for Materials not only in all the public Libraries, and Offices of Record in Dublin, but in the private Studies of Gentlemen, who furnished me with several curious Books in Print and Manuscript.'<sup>68</sup> He drew on the collections of John Stearne, William King, Dudley Loftus, the Archives of Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin, Narcissus Marsh's recently established public library, the collections of James Ware, and other collections in the library of Trinity College Dublin. The resulting two-volume work was published under the auspices of the Physico-Historical Society with whom Harris had a long association. This same scholarly milieu also provided the materials for Walter Harris's own *Hibernica* (1747), a compendium of historical documents that attracted 533 subscribers, including multiple copies purchased by booksellers in London and Dublin, and throughout Ireland. Harris contributed 'An essay on the defects in the histories of Ireland', which reiterated the agenda to be addressed by the Physico-Historical Society.<sup>69</sup> The dynamism of Harris and his associates in publishing their researches helped ensure that historical writing was an integral part of the scholarly agenda of the learned in eighteenth-century Ireland.

Through the eighteenth century, the translation into English, from either Latin or Irish, of major works of scholarship emanating from seventeenth-century Ireland contributed greatly to enhancing the understanding of the Irish past. The upper end of the print market for Irish history drew extensively on the scholarly efforts of earlier generations both English and Irish. In this way, although they were very different in origin, content, and purpose, the substantial folio volumes that comprised Harris's Ware and O'Connor's Keating were both in demand among eighteenth-century readers. Once these books were issued in print and in English they became significant works of reference about the Irish past for new generations of readers whose main language was English. The publication of Keating's *General History of*

<sup>66</sup> James Ware, *The Antiquities and History of Ireland . . . Together with . . . his Two Books of the Writers of Ireland . . . Now First Published in One Volume in English, and the Life of Sir J. W. Prefixed* (London, 1704–5, ESTC No30990).

<sup>67</sup> Walter Harris, *The Whole Works of Sir James Ware Concerning Ireland, Revised and Improved* (2 vols., Dublin, 1764, ESTC T114311; T114313), i. preface.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*  
<sup>69</sup> Walter Harris, *Hibernica, or some Antient Pieces Relating to Ireland* (2 pts, Dublin, 1747–50, ESTC T114311); G.L. H. Davies, 'The Making of Irish Geography, iv, the Physico-Historical Society of Dublin, 1742–52', *Irish Geography*, 12 (1979), 92–8.

*Ireland* in particular ensured that the historiographical traditions of medieval Ireland became part of revised Irish origin myths appropriate to the eighteenth-century mind. For those who tried to come to terms with the increasingly complex world of Irish historical writing facilitated by the expansion of print, guidance was available. Ware's biographical dictionary of Irish writers, as revised by Harris, served as a particularly useful guide through the extant literature, though Harris was himself conscious of his own limited skill in dealing with the relevant Irish language sources.<sup>70</sup>

## Conclusion

Although the evidence from early eighteenth-century subscription lists indicates that demand for books on historical topics did not equal that for works of literature, and that classical history still attracted more purchasers than did Irish history, nevertheless most gentlemen would have found space in their libraries for a selection of works on Irish history.<sup>71</sup> There developed in early eighteenth-century Ireland a historical culture that had both positive and negative elements. Some books such as those by Harris and Keating helped reassure readers of the worthiness of their country, and by extension, of themselves, by reference to their honourable past. As Harris and Smith noted in relation to their proposed studies of Irish counties 'not only the Honour, but the real interest of our country are the objects of its view'.<sup>72</sup> Simultaneously, the more partisan works of Sir John Temple and others that emerged during periods of political conflict and were reprinted periodically at times of crisis contributed to heightened divisions within society. In so far as Irish historical writing in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had emerged out of a politically and religiously divided society, print culture exacerbated those divisions by feeding memories of traumatic events in the past. At another level, the complex relationship with England was made more intricate still as English influences pervaded Irish print culture.

<sup>70</sup> Cunningham, *World of Geoffrey Keating*, 225.

<sup>71</sup> Cole, *Irish Booksellers*, passim. The library of Jonathan Swift, Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, reflects the continuing importance of the classics as compared with more recent historical writing. Swift's annotations in historical works in his own library tended to occur in the classical works rather than in recent history. Among the few exceptions to this were Edmund Ludlow's *Memoirs* ([Vevay], 1699, ESTC R36882), and Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1707, ESTC N5833). William LeFanu, *A Catalogue of Books belonging to Dr Jonathan Swift, Dean of St Patrick's, Dublin, Aug. 19, 1715* (Cambridge, 1988); Harold Williams, *Dean Swift's Library, with a Facsimile of the Original Sale Catalogue and Some Account of Two Manuscript Lists of his Books* (Cambridge, 1932).

<sup>72</sup> Harris and Smith, *County Down*, p. xii.



# Historical Writing, 1750–1800

*Deana Rankin*

He will meet with Druids and Bards, bringing giants and enchanters in their train: He will hear of writers before the use of letters was adopted, and of voyagers before the art of navigation was found out.—But all these things must not fright him.—Every nation has its antiquities, those antiquities are mixed with fables;—to separate the one from the other is the business of the Historian.

—John Huddleston Wynne, *A General History of Ireland from the Earliest Accounts to the Death of King William III*, 2 vols. (London, 1773), i. p. ix

## Prologue

On Tuesday 1 May 1792, the library of the late Denis Daly, independent member of Parliament for County Galway, advisor and friend to Henry Grattan, and classical scholar, fell under the hammer in Dublin. The auction, handled by James Vallance, was publicized by an extensive, finely produced catalogue, printed by the Dublin bookseller and printer John Archer, who had joined with his colleague, William Jones, to purchase the library from the Daly family and offer it for public sale. Running to 152 pages, listing 1,441 items organized according to subject and size, Archer's publication was rather more than a sales catalogue, for it also voiced a very personal appeal. In a preface steeped in the vocabulary of eighteenth-century discernment, praising '[t]he taste, the learning, and the liberality which the late Right Hon. Denis Daly evinced, in forming [this] capital collection of Books' the new, interim, proprietors explain their decision to purchase the library 'now offered, entire, to the Public':

They conceived it would have been, in some degree, disgraceful to the literary character of their Country-men, if such a Library as this, was carried out of the kingdom; to enrich the public, or private collections of other Nations.

Having thus established the patriotic credentials and aspiration of their enterprise, they aim to encourage a similar sentiment in the discerning Irish reader, insisting

That they have resisted the most tempting offers, for particular articles; it being their fixed determination, that every person, should have a fair, and equal opportunity, of becoming possessed of Books, so much superior, as these are, to any, which have been, hitherto, exposed for sale in this Country.<sup>1</sup>

There is, of course, much clever sales patter in this exhortation to patriotic purchase, as there is in the oscillation between the 'particular' books on sale and the library 'entire' that enhances their value. Yet in the last decade of the eighteenth century, as the network of literary societies associated with the United Irishmen expanded to encourage discussion of the recent sweeping changes in international politics, this auction also transcends the mercenary, capturing something of the spirit of the age. It is preferable to have Daly's scholarly collection remain in Ireland, even if scattered among the growing number of private libraries throughout the land, than to have it disappear 'entire' abroad. The catalogue's preface, with its proud articulation of the links between the library, the nation, and democracy—at least as far as the 'fair, and equal opportunity' to purchase is concerned—issues a challenge appropriate to the times. Whether sales ploy, political manifesto, or combination of both, Archer's appeal struck a chord. Lord Charlemont reported to Edward Malone, the veteran collector of drama, that 'prices were more than London could have afforded. I am glad of it . . . because Archer is an honest man, and deserved success for the more than Irish spirit of his enterprise.' Indeed Charlemont could not hold back a little patriotic relish that visiting English and Scottish booksellers were gratifyingly 'disappointed in their impudent expectation of finding Ireland a land of ignorance'.<sup>2</sup>

The publishing and book-buying worlds of the period were clearly coming to some recognition of the value—symbolic and literal—that books might have in the construction and preservation of a collective Irish inheritance. Yet, when it comes to Irish history writing in English in the late eighteenth century, the relatively few existing critical accounts tend to present it as a story of failure.<sup>3</sup> Certainly by the end of the century, whether entrenched in

<sup>1</sup> *A Catalogue of the library of the late Right Honourable Denis Daly* (Dublin, 1792, ESTC T3191), pp. iii–iv. On Daly's patriotism, see Vincent Morley, *Irish Opinion and the American Revolution, 1760–1783* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 165–7.

<sup>2</sup> Charlemont to Malone, 15 June 1792, Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont*, 2 vols. (London: HMSO, 1891–94) ii. 193–4. A manuscript note on the frontispiece of the Bodleian copy of the catalogue states that Lord Clare's offer of 4,000 guineas was rejected. The auctioneer's copy in the NLI states that £2,300 was raised at the sale.

<sup>3</sup> See Walter Love, 'Charles O'Connor of Belanagare and Thomas Leland's "Philosophical" History of Ireland', *Irish Historical Studies*, 13 (1963–4), 1–25; J. R. Hill, 'Popery and Protestantism, Civil and Religious Liberty: The Disputed Lessons of Irish History, 1690–1812', *Past and Present*, 118 (1988), 96–129;

the orthodoxies of native or settler narratives, or enmeshed in the minute archaeology of pre-conquest Ireland, Irish historiography lagged far behind that of the European Enlightenment. For those hoping that Ireland would deliver a ‘philosophical’ or ‘universal’ history to rival those produced in Scotland or France, this period could only disappoint. The nature of this ‘failure’, and of the disappointment of many readers are, however, worthy of close attention, particularly in relation to the expanding commercial print industry in Ireland.

### ‘Bound, Uniform and Elegant, in 13 Volumes’: Packaging History for an Irish Market

The latter half of the eighteenth century began with the threat of a revival of anti-Catholic prejudice in the aftermath of the 1745 Jacobite rebellion, even though Irish Catholics had not joined with the Scottish rebels. It also witnessed the growth of Protestant patriotism, a colonial nationalism that argued for Ireland’s right to self-government within a framework of union to England. As the century progressed, the foundation of first the Catholic Association (1756) and later the Catholic Committee (1760) galvanized resistance to the Penal Laws, often drawing on ‘patriot’ support from moderate Protestants. This culminated in the Catholic Relief Acts of 1774–93, largely passed under Grattan’s parliament. The century ended with the 1798 rising of the United Irishmen, closely followed by the 1800 Act of Union with England and Scotland.<sup>4</sup> Across the same fifty-year period, the number of printers and booksellers, libraries and readers, swelled to unprecedented levels across Ireland. As Archer’s handling of the Daly library sale suggests, this expanding book trade was thoroughly identified with a new brand of colonial nationalism, both literary and economic. On Monday 5 November 1753, ‘Roger Spy Esq’, editor of the *Dublin Spy*, answered a challenge to the Irish presses that he characterized

J. P. Delury, ‘Ex Conflictu Et Collisione: The Failure of Irish Historiography, 1745–1790’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 15 (2000), 9–37. Clare O’Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, 1750–1800* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004) is a valuable recent addition to the debate. English texts were read by a relatively small percentage (predominantly Protestant) of the population; see Mary Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland: The Long Traced Pedigree* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984), 15–41. On contemporary history writing in Irish and other languages see for example Nessa Ni Shéaghda, ‘Irish Scholars and Scribes in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 4 (1989), 41–54; Vincent Geoghegan, ‘A Jacobite History: The Abbé MacGeoghegan’s *History of Ireland*’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 6 (1991), 37–56.

<sup>4</sup> See R. B. McDowell, *Irish Public Opinion, 1750–1800* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943).

as 'the invasion of our civil libertys and propertys'. He issued a clarion call for his readers to

Discourage with hand and heart all editions printed in *England*, join together and determine, my dear country men, not to buy a book printed in *England*, since if ye let in so pernicious a custom, ye will be instrumental in ruining *Ireland*.<sup>5</sup>

The dangers of reading, the pernicious effects of the book on national morality, are not the problem here. Rather, it is the threat to economic not intellectual profit that is called to the patriot's attention. 'Buy Irish!'—the cry that Dean Swift had raised in the earlier part of the century in the face of English attempts to undermine the Irish economy—shifted from the 'Drapier' to the bookseller; by 1791 the founding charter of the Dublin Library Society declared 'no British copy to be bought if Irish edition of equal utility available'.<sup>6</sup> Capitalizing on the infamous loophole in copyright legislation detailed elsewhere in this volume,<sup>7</sup> Irish publishers across the eighteenth century became notorious for their ability to get hold of manuscripts under preparation for printing in London, and to produce—within weeks, sometimes days of its appearance in England—a pirate edition that could undercut the London version by a shilling or more.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, as catalogues for the latter part of the century demonstrate, in eighteenth-century Ireland—as in the rest of Europe—there was a considerable interest in the reading of history. Across a broad spectrum of the reading public, works of history were hugely popular. Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 6 vols. (London, 1776–88), was swiftly reprinted in various versions, full, partial, and abridged in Dublin in 1776, 1777, 1781, 1784, 1788, 1789, and 1790. It became the most popular historical work to feature in private collections of the period, appearing in sixty-seven libraries. According to the records of Armagh Public Library, which held both London and Dublin editions, it was the most popular choice for members, borrowed eighteen times between the opening of records in 1796

<sup>5</sup> Roger Spy (ed.), *Dublin Spy*, 5 November 1753, 1–2 (ESTC P3081). Spy was attacking Samuel Richardson's attempt to flood the Dublin market with London-produced copies of *Pamela* in order to out-sell the illegal Dublin edition; see Richard Cargill Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers 1740–1800* (London and New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1986), 62–3.

<sup>6</sup> See Robert Mahony, *Jonathan Swift: The Irish Identity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 1–24; Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland*, 96–8.

<sup>7</sup> See pp. 84–7.

<sup>8</sup> Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 1–22; Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 66–109; James Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670–1800: A Bibliographical Enquiry* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 103–47. The marketing infrastructure expanded accordingly. For 1700–49, STC lists just twelve book catalogues printed in Dublin as extant; for 1750–1800, that figure rises to over one hundred, the majority published between 1780 and 1800.

and their suspension in 1802.<sup>9</sup> In addition, David Hume's highly praised *History of England*, 6 vols. ([London, 1754–62]; Dublin, 1759, 1762, 1769, 1772, 1775, 1780, 1788), Tobias Smollett's controversial but hugely successful *History of England* ([London, 1757–8]; Dublin, 1787), and the Irish-born Oliver Goldsmith's *An History of England in a Series of Letters From a Nobleman to his Son* ([London, 1764]; Dublin, 1765, 1767, 1784) and *The History of England from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II* ([London, 1771]; Dublin, 1771, 1789, 1796) were all swiftly reprinted in cheaper editions in Dublin shortly after their first appearance.<sup>10</sup> Produced both for home consumption and for export, these Dublin ventriloquisms of English histories remained both in print and in circulation across the latter half of the century. The Dublin bookseller William Sleater's 1789 catalogue, for example, advertises Hume and Smollett 'to be had bound, uniform and elegant, in 13 volumes' for a total price of £4 4s 6d.<sup>11</sup> For those with more limited resources, the Catholic printer and bookseller Peter Hoey published the first of two Dublin editions of *Chronology: or a Concise View of the Annals of England* (London, 1769) by the prolific Revd. John Trusler under the title *The Historians Guide: Vademecum* (Dublin, 1773). 'Designed'—according to the title page—'for the Pocket, in Order to set People Right in Conversation', the first few lines give some flavour of this immensely popular compendium:

Aaron, born 1575, died, 1453, before Christ.

Abdalla, son of Omar, flourished 625.

Abel, born in 3 of the world; killed by Cain, 129 ditto.

Abelard, Peter, died 1143, aged 63.

And so it continues with Abraham, followed by Achilles; the first break in this pattern of brevity occurring when a full page is devoted to the lives of Charles I and II.<sup>12</sup> Hoey's Dublin version of Trusler's text did more than simply reproduce the original, for he added local flavour by including, together with a calendar of Irish fairs, lists of—the title page announces—'the Chief Governors of Ireland—Ditto of the Lord Mayors and Sheriffs of Dublin down to this Year—Ditto of the Peers of Ireland, with the Stiles of their eldest Sons'.

A readership thirsty for history combined with growing patriotic support for the Irish book trade might have led to a surge in titles published on Irish history, reflected in the printers' sales catalogues of the time. The evidence suggests otherwise. *A Catalogue of Books & C. sold by James Hoey*

<sup>9</sup> Armagh Public Library, MSH 11 3. See also Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 29, 130–47, 247.

<sup>10</sup> Full Dublin publication details listed in Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 241, 246–7.

<sup>11</sup> *A Catalogue of New, Useful and Entertaining books, printed for William Sleater* (Dublin, 1789), 9.

<sup>12</sup> John Trusler, *The Historians Guide: Vademecum* (Dublin, 1773, ESTC T93489), 1, 17–18. Hoey produced a second edition entitled *The Tablet of Memory: or Historians Guide* (Dublin, 1782). Trusler's 'Guide' ran to a total of thirteen editions in England and Ireland.

(Dublin, c.1773) lists no Irish history books. *A Catalogue of New Useful and Entertaining Books printed for William Sleater* (Dublin, 1789) includes the following studies: *A Historical and Critical Review of the Civill Wars in Ireland* by John Curry M.D. with the Life of the Author by C. O'Connor, Esq, 2 vols. priced at 13s; a recent reprint, 'with a new Life of the Author', of the perennial favourite Sir John Davies' *Historical Tracts*, at 5s 5d; and *The History of Ireland from the Earliest Authentic Accounts to the Revolution* by the Editors of the Modern Universal Society for 6s 6d. Item nineteen, John Ferrar's *The History of Limerick, Ecclesiastical, Civil and Military from the earliest Records to the Year 1787* (Limerick, 1767), priced at 7s 7d, indicates the rise in interest in local history as well as the increasing numbers of regional publishing houses, and item 67, John Huddleston Wynne's *A General History of Ireland*, cited in epigraph to this chapter, priced at 9s 9d, offers a unique attempt to place contemporary events in their historical context. Yet these five volumes are, in the collection of 168 items, the only books on Irish history to be listed. A fuller listing is found in George Draper's *A General Catalogue of Books in all Languages, Arts and Sciences, that have been printed in Ireland and published in Dublin, from the year 1700, to the Present Time* (Dublin, 1791), a collaborative effort by the city's printers to consolidate their position in the international market by offering a comprehensive listing of all their wares. In a catalogue of some seven thousand titles, under the general classification 'History, Biography, Antiquities, Voyages and Travels', some four hundred titles are listed alphabetically; of these only forty relate directly to Irish history (see Table 1).<sup>13</sup>

Returning to the sales catalogue for Daly's library, produced in the subsequent year, we find a collection seemingly more concerned with historical knowledge than with place of publication. There are several original seventeenth-century English-language histories of Ireland, including Sir James Ware, *The Historie of Ireland. Collected by Three Learned Authors, viz. M. Hammer, E. Campion and E. Spenser* (Dublin, 1633); *Pacata Hibernia* (London, 1633); and Sir Richard Cox, *Hibernia Anglicana, or the History of Ireland from the Conquest thereof by the English, to this Present Time*, 2 vols. (London, 1689–90). There are also a number of eighteenth-century editions of seventeenth-century memoirs of Irish relevance: *Memoirs of the Right Honourable the Marquis of Clanricarde, Lord Deputy General of Ireland* (London, 1722); Thomas Carte (ed.), *A Collection of Original Letters and Papers Concerning the Affairs of England from the Year 1641 to 1660 found among the Duke of Ormond's Papers*, 2 vols. (London, 1739); and an account of Glamorgan's

<sup>13</sup> George Draper, *A General Catalogue of Books* (ESTC T129394), 74–84. First produced by Luke White in 1786, it was compiled in response to William Bent's *A General Catalogue of Books: in all Languages, Arts and Sciences that have been printed in Great Britain, and published in London, since the year M. DCC.* (London, 1779).

**Table 1.** Books on Irish History Included in George Draper's *A General Catalogue of books in all languages, arts and sciences, that have been printed in Ireland and published in Dublin, from the year 1700, to the present time* (Dublin, 1791)

	£	s	d
Angel's <i>History of Ireland</i> , 2 vols 12mo	0	5	5
Borlase's <i>History of the Irish Rebellion</i> , folio	0	16	3
Castlehaven's <i>Memoirs of Ireland</i> , 12mo	0	2	8h
Clarendon's (Lord) <i>History of Ireland</i> , 8vo	0	4	4
Comerford's <i>History of Ireland</i> , 12mo	0	2	8h
Coxe's (Sir Richard) <i>History of Ireland</i> , folio	1	10	0
Crawford's <i>History of Ireland</i> , 2 vols 8vo	0	13	0
Curry's <i>Historical Review of the Wars in Ireland</i> , 4to	0	16	3
—the same, new edition, 2 vols 8vo	0	13	0
Dalrymple's (Sir John) <i>Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland</i> , 4 vols 8vo	1	6	0
—4th Volume separate	0	5	5
Davies's (Sir John) <i>Historical Tracts relating to Ireland</i> , 8vo	0	5	5
Ferrar's <i>History of Limerick</i> , 8vo	0	7	7
Harris's <i>Ancient State of the County Down</i> , 8vo	0	4	4
— <i>Antiquities of Dublin</i> , 8vo	0	6	6
— <i>Life of King William</i> with Plates, folio	1	2	9
—the same, 4 vols 12 mo	0	10	10
— <i>Hibernica</i> , 8vo	0	6	6
— <i>Historical Memoirs of 1641</i>	0	3	3
<i>History of Ireland from the earliest Accounts, by the Authors of the Modern Universal History</i> , 8vo	0	6	6
— <i>Memoirs of the Irish Rebellion</i> , 12mo	0	2	8h
<i>Irish Historical Library</i> , 8vo	0	4	4
Keating's <i>History of Ireland</i> , folio	1	10	0
Ledwich's <i>Antiquities of Ireland</i> , with fine Plates, 2 vols quarto	2	10	0
Leland's (Dr Thos.) <i>History of Ireland</i> , 3 vols 4to	2	5	6
—the same, in 3 vols 8vo	0	19	6
Lyttleton's <i>History of Henry II</i> , 4 vols 8vo	1	8	0
Macurtin's <i>History of Ireland</i> , 4to	0	11	4h
O'Halloran's <i>History of Ireland</i> , 2 vols 4to	1	12	6
— <i>Introduction to Irish History</i>	0	15	2
Smith's (Charles) <i>History of the Co. Cork</i> , 2 vols 8vo Plates	0	13	0
— <i>of Waterford</i> , 8vo ditto	0	6	6
— <i>of Kerry</i> , 8vo ditto	0	6	6
Temple's <i>History of the Irish Rebellion</i> , 4to	0	5	5
Walker's (J. Cooper) <i>Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards</i> , 4to boards	0	13	0
Ware's (Sir James) <i>History and Antiquities of Ireland</i> , 2 vols folio	2	5	6
— <i>History of the Bishops</i> , folio	0	18	5
Warner's <i>History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in Ireland</i> , 2 vols 8vo	0	10	10
— <i>History of Ireland</i> , 2 vols 8vo	0	10	10
Wynne's <i>History of Ireland</i> , 3 vols 12mo	0	9	9

negotiations with the Catholic Confederation. New Dublin editions of seventeenth-century works on Ireland such as Sir William Petty, *Tracts Chiefly Relating to Ireland* (Dublin, 1769); Sir John Davies, *Historical Tracts . . . to which is Prefixed a New Life of the Author* (Dublin, 1787); and Archbishop William King's (anonymously published) *The State of the Protestants of Ireland Under the Late King James's Government* (Dublin, 1730) do also figure in Daly's history collection.<sup>14</sup> Alongside these predominantly Anglo-Protestant accounts of Ireland's past, one late seventeenth-century volume is singled out for particular comment: item 374, *The Unkinde Desertor of Loyall Men, and True Friends* (London [actually Paris], 1676), *superiorum permissu*. The catalogue is here interrupted by a comment from the sellers:

This very rare and curious book was written by Nicholas French, Titular Bishop of Ferns, Author of the Bleeding Iphegenia; it is an invective against the Duke of Ormond, and is one of the scarcest pieces relating to Irish affairs.<sup>15</sup>

The volume was auctioned, the annotator of the Bodleian copy of the catalogue informs us, for the considerable sum of £2 13s. Both the over-attentive gloss and the price fetched suggest the precious silences that shadow Daly's library shelves.<sup>16</sup> As had been repeatedly demonstrated across previous centuries, the contested history of Ireland had more power to divide than to unite. Just a few years after this library sale, in its 1795 'Declaration of Political Principles', the Dublin chapter of the United Irishmen acknowledged the dangers of the Irish past. Members resolved to look to the future, to found a new peace on 'not the gloomy and precarious stillness of men brooding over their wrongs, but that stable tranquillity which rests on the rights of human nature'.<sup>17</sup> Was this how Daly experienced the burden of the history of Ireland? Sales catalogues do not tell us about how people of the past read the books they owned; however, Daly's collection does show that, even in the library of an occasional patriot, Irish Catholic versions of the history of Ireland, written in the English language, are still a rare exception.

Daly's history collection suggests that the late eighteenth-century reader of Irish history remained firmly in thrall to the seventeenth-century English text. His was, of course, the library of an educated Anglo-Protestant with patriotic tendencies, but it was not only in the expensive private collection that this was so. As Ó Ciosáin has pointed out, the chapbook publishing and reading of Irish history was, throughout the eighteenth century, dominated by two politically opposed, late-seventeenth-century texts. On the

<sup>14</sup> *Catalogue of the library of . . . Denis Daly*, 16–53. The catalogue erroneously lists both Petty and Davies as London editions. <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* Item 504, Peter Walsh's *The History and Vindication of the Loyal Formulary, or Irish Remonstrance* (London, 1674), is described as 'very scarce'.

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Stephens (ed.), *Proceedings of the Society of United Ulstermen of Dublin* (Philadelphia: Jacob Johnson and Co, 1795), 11.



one hand, Hugh Reily's *Impartial History*, first published in either Louvain or Paris as *Ireland's Case Briefly Stated* (1695), gave a Jacobite account of the injustices suffered by Catholics across the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; on the other, Nathaniel Crouch's *The History of the Kingdom of Ireland* (London, 1693), an abridged version of George Story's *An Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland* (London, 1693), gave an Anglo-Protestant account of the same period.<sup>18</sup> While these two parallel, but mutually exclusive, historical narratives provided relatively cheap material for 'country' readers, Sir John Temple's notorious anti-Catholic account of 1641, *The Irish Rebellion* (London, 1646), dominated the more expensive reprint market. Denounced as seditious by James II's Dublin parliament in 1689, it was cherished by the Ascendancy Protestant elite and reprinted throughout the eighteenth century, in 1713, 1716, 1724, 1726, 1746, and c. 1751 in Dublin, and finally, in 1766, against a background of agrarian unrest in Munster suspected to be a nascent 'popish rebellion', a 'seventh edition' was published by Phineas and George Bagnell of Castle St, Cork.<sup>19</sup> The monotonous regularity of such reprints suggests that the partisan history of Ireland, across the eighteenth century, was preached (repeatedly) to the converted; that booksellers persisted in circulating received historical orthodoxies to ready-constituted, self-selecting—and fairly lucrative—readerships, rather than run the financial risk of encouraging the exploration of new historiographical territory.

However, this is only part of the story, for Daly's shelves also house a few examples of late eighteenth-century histories of Ireland: Thomas Leland's *History of Ireland*, 3 vols. (London, 1773); a number of volumes by Walter Harris—*Ware's Antiquities of Ireland* (Dublin, 1765), *Hibernica* (Dublin, 1747), and *History of King William and the Affairs of Ireland* (Dublin, 1749); and finally tucked away—whether by accident or by design—under 'Books Omitted', items 1393, 1394, Sylvester O'Halloran's *Introduction to the History and Antiquities of Ireland* (Dublin, 1772) and *General History of Ireland*, 2 vols. (London, 1778). These contemporary volumes gesture towards the movements and obsessions that animated the writing of Irish history in the second half of the century: Leland stands as evidence of the repeated attempts to produce a general narrative history of Ireland that could encompass both native and settler accounts of the past, without avoiding the trauma of the seventeenth century; Harris's presence testifies not only to the new patriot drive to lay claim to native Irish cultural inheritance, but also to the presence

<sup>18</sup> Niall Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750–1850* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 102–7. Both histories remained in print, and were expanded, well into the nineteenth century.

<sup>19</sup> It was also reprinted in London in 1723 and 1746. William King, *The State of the Protestants* (London, 1691), was republished in 1692 and in Cork in 1768; see T. C. Barnard, 'The Uses of the 23rd October 1641 and Irish Protestant Celebrations', *English Historical Review*, 106 (1991), 894.

of a Dublin publishing industry able to support such work. O'Halloran's later, marginalized volumes perform a more complicated function: they signal a number of new departures in history writing, namely a native Irish narrative history, written in English, founded in antiquarian scholarship of pre-conquest Ireland, published in both London and Dublin, and challenging the Anglo-Protestant hegemony over the history of Ireland. They also remind us, once again, of the absences in Daly's library, in particular the work of the Irish scholars John Curry and Charles O'Connor, and their attempts to find a way of bringing Catholic Irish history to a moderate Protestant readership.

### 'To Conciliate not to Irritate': In Search of a Philosophical History of Ireland

The pressure on Irish historians—whether native or settler—to produce a history of Ireland was exacerbated by the fact that Scotland, Ireland's arch rival within the Three Kingdoms, had produced in the mid-century two of the most famous (or infamous) eighteenth-century history writers: David Hume and James Macpherson. The 'philosophical history' of the former was to become an intellectual aspiration for Catholic and Protestant historians of Ireland alike. The romantic inventions of the latter, in particular, that northern Homer, Ossian, found an enthusiastic readership across Europe; Macpherson's unprecedented attack on the authenticity of Irish records had, however, caused angry consternation among Irish antiquarians, both Protestant and Catholic.<sup>20</sup> The archives and artefacts of pre-conquest Ireland, so long the preserve of Irish-language scholars, took on prime importance to all those concerned with ensuring, in the decades before the Act of Union, that Ireland had equal footing with Scotland within the Three Kingdoms. Clearly some satisfactory method of documenting Ireland's divided and divisive history had to be found.

In the mid-century, the Dublin physician John Curry and the scholar of ancient Ireland, Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, pinned their hopes on producing a credible 'philosophical history' of Ireland, modelled on the work

<sup>20</sup> On the impact of Macpherson in Ireland see Michéal MacCraith, 'Fingal: Text, Context, Subtext', in F. Stafford and H. Gaskill (eds.), *From Gaelic to Romantic Ossianic Traditions* (Amsterdam and Atlanta Ga., 1998), 59–68; Joep Leerssen, *Meer Irish and Fionn-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), 338–49. See also Ian Haywood, *The Making of History: A Study of the Literary Forgeries of James Macpherson and Thomas Chatterton in Relation to Eighteenth-Century Ideas of History and Fiction* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1986), 73–119.

of Hume, but also putting to rights Hume's mistakes about 1641.<sup>21</sup> John Curry's *A Brief Account from the most Authentic Protestant Writers . . . of the Irish Rebellion* (London [actually Dublin], 1747), anonymously published in the wake of the Jacobite Rebellion, sought to construct a powerful defence of Irish Catholic loyalty from *within* the long-established tradition of Protestant history. The result is a multiply subversive text. First, as his title suggests, Curry cites and demolishes his most virulent historiographical enemies, in particular the seventeenth-century English historians Temple and Borlase. Second, the *Brief Account* takes on the dialogue form made notorious in Ireland by that fiercest of sixteenth-century proponents of the English conquest, Edmund Spenser, in his *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (c. 1596). Third, in a remarkable act of ventriloquism, Curry stages a dialogue between a Dissenter and a member of the Church of Ireland, in such a way as to give Protestant voice to Catholic loyalty. Curry thus used the forms of Ascendancy history writing to undermine Ascendancy versions of history. In a final twist, Curry's title page casts an intriguing veil over the entire enterprise, proclaiming the text was published, not in Dublin, but in London. The *Brief Account* was, in short, carefully designed to bear all the hallmarks of an authentic work by an Irish patriot.<sup>22</sup>

Charles O'Connor's first publication, also anonymous, *Dissertations on the Antient History of Ireland* (Dublin, 1753) attempts no such disguise. Published by James Hoey, one of the most successful Catholic printers in Dublin at the time, it articulates a historical manifesto with a different sense of the 'authentic' from that of Curry or his 'Protestant Writers'. O'Connor sets himself the task of

gathering up some Parts of our historical Wreck, and examining how far they may be depended upon, as authentic Materials, such as distinguish History from Fable, and truth from that romantic Antiquity, which Vanity only bestows, and which a small Degree of Sagacity detects.<sup>23</sup>

Dismissing James Ware as 'very lame and defective, in many particulars' especially in his lack of Irish; chiding Geoffrey Keating for his fabulous tales; and further despairing over the English translation—'the grossest Imposition that has been ever yet obtruded on a learned Age'—O'Connor lays quiet, authoritative claim to his unique position to judge authenticity: he is both a scholar of Irish, and an admirer of English culture who favours Samuel Johnson as an exemplary historian over those of his own country and language.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> On the influence of Temple on Hume, see Hill, 'The Disputed Lessons of Irish History', 108–12.

<sup>22</sup> See also [Curry and O'Connor], *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Rebellion in the Year 1641* (London [actually Dublin], 1758), reprinted in London in 1765 and 1767, and a revised edition in Dublin, 1770.

<sup>23</sup> O'Connor, *Dissertations* (ESTCT 146898), 7–8.

<sup>24</sup> On Johnson's encouragement to O'Connor, see James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, ed. G. Birkbeck Hill and L. Powell, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), i. 321–2.

O'Connor insists on the need to educate, both at home and abroad, lamenting that most Irish histories to date had been written 'without considering that some are Strangers to the whole Matter, or that all may be so, perhaps, in a different Age.'<sup>25</sup> Irish history had thus far been preached only to the converted; the time now appeared ripe to extend the boundaries both of knowledge and of readership.

These early forays into the production of a pro-Catholic history of Ireland in English raise a number of problems that continue to haunt historians across the latter half of the eighteenth century. It was no longer simply a question of giving voice to Catholic Irish experience for the primary problem of access to Irish printing presses had been resolved. Indeed, James Hoey's printing of O'Connor's *Dissertations* suggests, despite the fact that their religion excluded them from full membership of the printers' guild, ever-growing numbers of Catholic printers were running successful businesses in Dublin and were willing to publish controversial work.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, as the century wore on, a number of patriot printers became increasingly supportive of the publication of Catholic texts. So it was that the second edition of *Dissertations* (Dublin, 1766), now bearing O'Connor's name, was published by George Faulkner, a relation and associate of James Hoey.<sup>27</sup> To mark the occasion—and historical developments in the interim—O'Connor updated the work 'With some remarks on Mr Mac Pherson's translation of Fingal and Tempora', which give a clue to the scope of O'Connor's ambitions. The tenor of these 'remarks' was unequivocal: O'Connor's conclusion—that 'no Gentleman, or Sharper, ever knew less of the Trade of an able Imposter, than the most memorable Mr. JAMES MACPHERSON'—was more than an intemperate outburst.<sup>28</sup> It was a judgement designed for a new imagined readership, calculated to unite Irish antiquarian scholar and Anglo-Irish patriot in the work of rendering Irish history accessible. The challenge remained, however, of giving voice to the cause of disenfranchised Catholics in a manner acceptable to the enfranchised Protestant reader. Curry's attempt had failed, largely because he made the mistake of attacking the Protestant antiquarian Walter Harris, who swiftly demolished Curry's carefully constructed textual bluff in *Fiction Unmasked or An Answer to a dialogue lately published by a Popish Physitian* (Dublin, 1752). Here a more

<sup>25</sup> O'Connor, *Dissertations*, p. xx.

<sup>26</sup> See Thomas Wall, *The Sign of Dr Hay's Head* (1958), 41–58; Philips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 30–3. Patrick Lord, for example, published O'Connor, *The Case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland* (1755); Curry, *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Rebellion of 1641* (1759); [H. Brookes], *Case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, Letters I–IV* (1760); *Dissertations on the History of Ireland* (1766); and John Angel, *General History of Ireland* (1781).

<sup>27</sup> Faulkner also published O'Connor's edition of Roderick O'Flaherty's *Ogygia Vindicated Against the Objections of Sir George Mackenzie* (Dublin, 1775).

<sup>28</sup> O'Connor, *Dissertations* (1766, ESTC N8915), 65.

recognizably Spenserian balance to the dialogue form is restored as Harris's 'Papist' is thoroughly silenced by Harris's triumphant 'Protestant'.<sup>29</sup> O'Connor's *Dissertations*, though relatively well received in intellectual circles in England, were only a first tentative step towards the 'philosophical' history he and Curry craved.

Access to Irish printers, even to Irish Protestant printers, was not then enough: there remained a further geographical challenge. As Curry's attempted bluff suggests, a London printer with the promise of an English audience remained an aspiration for Catholic historians. For O'Connor, free access to a metropolitan readership of policymakers, not simply a number of favourable reviews, remained an as yet unfulfilled ambition. As Kinane points out, although Ireland's first academic printing house was founded in 1733, scholarly history continued to be printed in London for many years thereafter: even Leland, former fellow of Trinity, had his 1773 *History of Ireland* published there.<sup>30</sup> The prestige of London publication appears to be the main attraction for would-be subscribers. When Sylvester O'Halloran, the new voice of Irish national history, eventually published his *Introduction to the Study of the History and Antiquities of Ireland*, in London, in 1772 with J. Murray of Fleet Street, it carried a glittering subscription list of Catholics and Patriots from Ireland, as well as some English supporters. This was omitted from the Dublin imprint, produced in the same year by Thomas Ewing. As O'Halloran himself experienced, however, London publication also had its disadvantages. In the preface to his later *General History of Ireland* (London, 1778), he apologizes, 'I have been obliged to put down the Irish quotations through this work, in English characters, as no Irish type was to be found in London'.<sup>31</sup>

However, such practical drawbacks were not the real problem. As the publishing careers of both Curry and O'Connor demonstrate, it was becoming increasingly possible for an Irish Catholic writer to publish controversial pamphlets in Dublin, and even to reach a London readership.<sup>32</sup> It remained, however, highly unlikely that any attempt at a 'philosophical history' by a Catholic author would command sufficient attention and respect either at home or abroad. Catholic writers of the 1750s and 1760s were, then, condemned to be controversialists; as partisan pamphleteers they could find both publishers and a reading public. Yet both Curry and O'Connor still believed that only by rising above the partisan account could Ireland find its

<sup>29</sup> See Delury, 'Ex Conflictu et Collisione', 11–15. Harris's antiquarian interests did not temper his strong Protestant politics. See, for example, his partisan additions to Sir James Ware in *The History of the Writers of Ireland, in Two Books . . . Newly Translated into English, Revised and Improved* (Dublin, 1764).

<sup>30</sup> Vincent Kinane, *A History of the Dublin University Press 1734–1976* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1994).

<sup>31</sup> O'Halloran, *A General History of Ireland* (ESTC T56380), i, 1.

<sup>32</sup> See Love, 'Charles O'Connor of Belangare', 6–10.

way into the mainstream of the European enlightenment and Irish Catholics find a role in the emerging nation. In 1747, Curry had attempted to invent a Protestant persona to move towards this goal; over the next twenty-five years, O'Connor sought to enlist a credible, scholarly, Protestant author to further the cause. Between 1750 and 1775, O'Connor actively encouraged a series of Ascendancy and English writers—Henry Brooke, Ferdinando Warner, Thomas Leland—to use the material he sent them to produce the kind of narrative history that would not only rival but also replace Hume's philosophical history, in particular where it concerned matters Irish.

There were, however, practical problems with the enterprise. One of O'Connor's great hopes, Warner, outlined the economic conundrum of Irish history in the dedication of his *The History of Ireland from the Earliest Authentic Accounts to the Year 1171* (Dublin, 1770) to the King. It was, he argued, unlikely to become an over-crowded field

because of the expence, too great for private persons, of collecting, explaining and publishing these fragments; which, after all, perhaps not fifty people in both kingdoms would have curiosity or inclination enough to peruse.<sup>33</sup>

Warner spoke from bitter experience: the first volume of his history had appeared in London in 1763, printed for J. and R. Tonson, but sales did not justify the printing of a continuation. Probably in an attempt to make money from his venture—and to the bitter disappointment of O'Connor—Warner went for the more lucrative, controversial angle. *The History of the Rebellion and Civil War of Ireland* appeared in London, also for J. and R. Tonson, in 1767 and was swiftly reprinted in Dublin, in 1768, for James Williams. It was the success of this volume that spurred Williams to resurrect Warner's earlier general history, publishing *The History of Ireland* in two volumes in 1770. Warner's *History of the Rebellion*, disappointingly non-committal on the question of 1641, therefore overshadowed his 'general' and 'authentic' history, prejudicing its Irish reception. For O'Connor, who had worked painstakingly to provide Warner with documentation of pre-conquest Ireland, this rubbed salt in the wound.

O'Connor and Curry, to all intents and purposes ignored by their protégés, found themselves back in familiar territory, trapped in old arguments concerning 1641. In one last desperate attempt, to produce a 'philosophical history', O'Connor enlisted the help of George Faulkner to persuade the Church of Ireland clergyman and scholar Thomas Leland to grasp the nettle.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Warner, *The History of Ireland*, 2 vols. (Dublin, 1770, ESTC T61138), i. pp. v–vi. Warner had received generous support from the Dublin Society 'Leerssen, *Meer Irish and Fíor-Ghael*, 333–6'.

<sup>34</sup> Faulkner considered offering fifty guineas to Dr Samuel Johnson to write, if not a history of Ireland, then a historical defence of Irish Catholics.

Work began c.1769 and, once again, the endlessly optimistic O'Connor supplied materials to this new hopeful. Eventually published four years later, Leland's *History of Ireland* proved to be another disappointment, in that it engaged only minimally with alternative Catholic accounts, peddling once again the old commonplaces about 1641. Alerted to the shortcomings of Leland's work as it went to press, Curry joined forces with O'Connor and took up his pen, funding a London publication for his riposte, to coincide with that of Leland's work. It was the first time that the veterans of the Dublin pamphlet wars had collaborated on a London publication. *Occasional Remarks on Certain Passages in Dr Leland's History of Ireland, Relative to the Irish Rebellion in 1641 in a letter to M—F—Esq* [Price 1s 6d] (London, 1773) presents a polite yet scathing textual critique of Leland's treatment of 1641.<sup>35</sup> Once again, Irish history became an exercise of claim and counter-claim; the promised narrative sweep of a 'philosophical history' became enmeshed in ultimately unresolvable disputes over a few months in the mid-seventeenth century.

In a postscript to the *Occasional Remarks*, Curry holds out one last hope: his own forthcoming history of the Irish civil wars, now under preparation. After so many disappointments, it was to this historical project—the setting right of the wrongs of 1641 once and for all so as to clear the way for a more 'philosophical' account—that O'Connor now devoted his attention. He arranged the necessary subscriptions and, summoning together the resources of James Hoey, T. F. Faulkner, G. Burnet, and J. Morris, organized the printing of *An Historical and Critical Review of the Civil Wars in Ireland from the Reign of Queen Elizabeth to the Settlement King William* (Dublin, 1775).<sup>36</sup> The frontispiece announced proudly 'His Design is to conciliate, not to irritate', but, as the title suggests, Curry had by now effectively abandoned the project of carving out a new narrative history of Ireland that would be distinctly Irish in its conception, while still appealing to the colonial policymakers of both Dublin and London. Entangled in the seventeenth century, still harping on 1641, Curry's text, rather than engaged in contemporary international debates about the future of history writing, was locked into arguments with historians long dead. Only well into the nineteenth century would the 'failures' of O'Connor and Curry be rewritten as vital steps towards that 'authentic' Irish history that they strove so long to produce.

<sup>35</sup> See Love, 'Charles O'Connor of Belangare', 13–16. Curry's attack centres on the disputed dates for the Protestant massacre of Catholics on Islandmagee.

<sup>36</sup> Curry began compiling this work c.1762, using part of the materials collected in *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Rebellion* (Dublin, 1765). The appendix contains valuable documentation of the murders of Catholics taken from the 1641 depositions 'Curry, *An Historical and Critical Review*, 159–447'.

## ‘To Establish the Antecedent Facts’: The Recovery of Antiquity

If Hume’s ‘philosophical’ history had been the obsession of the generation of Curry and O’Conor, from the 1770s onwards Scotland, in the figure of Macpherson, presented a new generation of Irish historians with not so much a model as a *bête noire*. Turning to another contemporary European fascination, antiquarianism, scholars sought to counter Macpherson’s fictions and misrepresentations, and to produce a different, but still conciliatory, version of Irish history. Authors such as Sylvester O’Halloran continued the quest, this time successfully, for London as well as Dublin publication and for an international readership, while still experimenting with the narrative genre to give voice to native history. Crucial to the success of this newer generation was the fact that they restricted themselves to the writing of Ireland’s ancient past. Playing to their strengths as scholarly mediators, they brought the archives of pre-conquest Ireland to an Anglo-Irish elite hungry for knowledge, but without the language skills necessary to unearth it themselves. Assuming the questionable role of the native informant, they nonetheless left little room for doubt about their political intentions. O’Halloran, for example, may have anticipated the reception of his *General History of Ireland* with some trepidation:

In what light this work will be considered by my country I am at a loss to know. I am sensible that men reluctantly part with their prejudices and their opinions; and the later periods of our history have been so shamefully misrepresented, that it will require some time to establish the antecedent facts.

He was, however, thoroughly sure of his own motivation, writing, he insists, from ‘The duty I owed MY MUCH NEGLECTED AND MUCH INJURED COUNTRY’.<sup>37</sup>

The success of O’Halloran’s work was remarkable. For some within that strange late-eighteenth-century alliance of patriot and Catholic enthusiasts of Gaelic culture that set itself the task of repudiating Macpherson, however, it was also deeply threatening. Certainly Ireland had to make a counterclaim against the Scottish usurpation of its distant past but, for Ascendancy scholars, many patriots included, the thinly veiled nationalism to which O’Halloran gave voice was a dangerous development. Any coherent account of the advanced civilization of pre-conquest Ireland risked undermining the dominant English historical narrative of sovereignty, of the triumph of English civilization over Irish barbarism. In order to avoid such scholarly

<sup>37</sup> O’Halloran, *A General History of Ireland*, i. p. xxxviii.



schisms, a ‘neutral’ historical form was urgently required: a way of celebrating Ireland’s distinctive ancient cultural heritage, while simultaneously sanitizing it of its more radical contemporary political inferences. In the last years of the century, thanks in part to the new print technologies available in late eighteenth-century Dublin, just such a new and enduring historical form appeared to emerge. The learned, illustrated journal brought Ireland’s ancient archives vividly into an apparently depoliticized, but in truth re-colonized, contemporary public sphere. For while the journals—produced by Vallancey and by the Royal Irish Academy—offered a considerable boost to Irish antiquarian scholarship, they also diverted attention away both from the ‘philosophical’ approach to historical thought and from the Irish Catholic alternative to the master narrative of the Ascendancy implied by O’Halloran’s *General History*.

The first of the two collections, the *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis* (Dublin, 1786–1807), was launched by ‘Major’ Charles Vallancey, the most controversial figure among the Dublin antiquarians.<sup>38</sup> The Preface to the first volume announces Vallancey’s intention to produce a new library of original historical texts:

In a word, it is proposed to give the public every interesting matter that concerns this kingdom and its antiquities, partly from our own labours, in such numbers as shall not exceed the price of Three Shillings each, and frequently under that value.<sup>39</sup>

These were laudable aims, promising perhaps to offer new choices for historical reading to the popular reading market still saturated, as explored earlier, by partisan versions of seventeenth-century history. Also present, however, in the preface to the first volume was a hint that the series—edited and (largely) funded by Vallancey—would come to be dominated by his own eccentric and ill-informed theories on the origins of the Irish language. This was indeed the case: his ‘An Essay on the Antiquity of the Irish Language’ formed the bulk of the second volume and by volume four, all the essays were penned by an increasingly intellectually isolated Vallancey.<sup>40</sup> His death marked the demise of the *Collectanea*.

Vallancey’s more lasting achievement was to have been instrumental in the establishment of the Royal Irish Academy. The launch of Ireland’s first scholarly journal published under the aegis of the academic establishment appeared to offer a more stable forum for scholarship than the highly personal platform of the *Collectanea*. It also offered a rare moment of victory

<sup>38</sup> Vallancey was posted to Ireland in 1762, became interested in Irish, and without expertise, published widely on the subject. He was a founder member of the Hibernian Antiquarian Society (1779–83), which effectively evolved into the Royal Irish Academy, founded 1782. See also his *Grammar of the Ibero-Celtic, or Irish Language* (Dublin, 1773) and *Essay towards illustrating the Ancient History of the Britannic Isles* (Dublin, 1786).

<sup>39</sup> *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis*, I (Dublin, 1786, ESTCT 145231), p. xii.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, I. pp. ix–xi; II. 252–336.

for Irish historians, for *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, first published in Dublin in 1787, narrowly beat its Scottish rival, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1788), to the presses.<sup>41</sup> The preface to the first volume recognizes the schisms that have perpetuated the neglect of the pursuit of knowledge in Ireland:

nor could it reasonably be presumed, that two classes of inhabitants entirely dissimilar in their inclinations and habits, and afterwards more widely separated by a difference in religion, should be readily prevailed upon to lay aside their mutual enmity, and write in the pursuit of speculative science.<sup>42</sup>

It goes on to assert that 'The Royal Irish Academy for Science, Polite Literature and Antiquities', under royal approval and with an impressive list of patrons, will rectify such previous failures.

Initially, the signs were good: over half of the first volume is devoted to 'Antiquities', with seven lengthy essays on the detailed study of archaeology and artefacts, including an ancient inscription in Ogham, a Greek manuscript in Trinity College, and an ancient urn from Wicklow.<sup>43</sup> Yet, the forensic archaeological model of history that the Academy adopted resulted in another kind of historiographical failure: a fragmented mosaic of round towers, and obscure arguments about the origins of the Irish language. It was, moreover, a fragmentation tightly framed within the discourse of colonial nationalism. What presents itself as the setting aside of sectarian history in 'the pursuit of speculative science' eventually proves to be the first concerted attempt of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy to colonize the ancient Irish past.<sup>44</sup> Published in 1791, the year before the sale of Daly's library, the Revd. Edward Ledwich's 'Observations on the Romantic History of Ireland' stands out among the seven volumes of the *Transactions* as a unique example of engagement, not with the details or the preservation of the archive, but with the nature of historiography itself:

A nation emerging from incivility and ignorance reluctantly gives up the fictions of poets and genealogists, because they are the only vouchers for ancient ancestry, and the only evidences of extinct national honour. But when that nation arrives at higher degrees of improvement and polish, these phantoms vanish, and individuals and nations seek for honour and unfading remembrance by personal desert and patriotic exertion

*Fama manet facti: posito velamine currunt:  
Et memorem famam, quod bene cessit, habet.*<sup>45</sup>

<sup>41</sup> A total of seven volumes were printed by George Bonham before production ceased in 1802: Vol. II, undated [1788]; III (1790); IV and V, undated; VI (1797); VII (1800).

<sup>42</sup> *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, I (Dublin, 1787), pp. ix–x.

<sup>43</sup> Each volume contains three separately paginated sections, here 'Science', 1–89; 'Polite literature', 1–87; 'Antiquities', 1–160.

<sup>44</sup> Leerssen, *Meer Irish and Fier-Ghael*, 294–376.

<sup>45</sup> *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, IV [1791], 21–32; here, 21–2.

Ledwich's description of the evolution of history may at first glance seem to echo the dangers of history that Huddleston Wynne identified in the epigraph to this chapter. However, Ledwich's account offers no sense of the thrill of reading, the adventure of the historical chase. In terms that resonate as far back as Spenser's *View*, Ledwich's 'Observations' enact the erasure of the very forms of native history writing. Armed with a new rhetoric of Ascendancy 'facts' opposing the claims of native 'fictions', he proposes nothing less than the re-establishment of the civilizing mission of Ascendancy historiography. 'Facts' banish the ghosts and eradicate the shadows. The historian must not only distinguish, he must also extinguish.

As the century drew to a close the archives of the ancient past could no longer, it seems, compete with the contemporary political upheavals. As tensions between nationalist and Ascendancy scholars grew more divisive, as the uprising of the United Irishmen gathered momentum, antiquities, and indeed the business of history writing, appeared, for the moment, to have been shifted to the sidelines. In the 1797 volume of the *Transactions*, 'Antiquities' has just 33 pages whereas 'Science' has 435 pages. In 1800, the year of the Act of Union and the seventh and final volume of the *Transactions* before publication was suspended, the 'Antiquities' promised on the title page appear nowhere at all. Turning his back on the *Transactions*, however, Ledwich went on to deliver on his promise. His immensely successful volume, *The Antiquities of Ireland*, published in Dublin, first in 1790 and in a revised and definitive second edition in 1804, recuperated the discoveries that had packed the pages of *Transactions*, the details so patiently and repeatedly offered across the period by such as O'Connor and Curry, into a Unionist master-narrative. In doing so, Ledwich also set the scholarly standard for the nineteenth century.<sup>46</sup> It was the texts of Ledwich and O'Halloran that continued to appear across the early part of the nineteenth century, the ancient past of Ireland that continued to dominate its future.

<sup>46</sup> On Ledwich's formative influence on nineteenth-century historiography, see Oliver Macdonagh, *States of Mind: A Study of the Anglo-Irish Conflict* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1983), 1–2.

# Literature in Print, 1550–1800

*Andrew Carpenter*

## 1550–1600

Since late-sixteenth-century Ireland was an unsettled world and its English-speaking community was a small one, interest in printed books of ‘polite literature’ developed more slowly here than elsewhere in Europe. Dublin, although a small city, was the seat of English power in Ireland, and the place where the English language was most widely spoken. It remained, throughout the late sixteenth century, a city under the distant but perceptible influence of English-language Renaissance culture. Several of its prominent citizens were habitual users of books, having spent time at English universities or Inns of Court. Some citizens owned collections of printed books and manuscripts, and there seems to have been, to a limited extent, the sort of intellectual interaction one would expect in an English city of comparable size at the time. The circle surrounding the Lord Deputy always contained men used to the lifestyle of London, for whom reading was a perfectly normal activity. During periods when a Renaissance figure, such as Sir Henry Sidney, was in residence as Lord Deputy, Dublin Castle would have been a place for music, dancing, and the reading of books for pleasure. It was also considered a place of literary patronage: Richard Stanihurst dedicated both his *Description of Ireland* and his *Continuation of the Chronicles of Ireland* to Sidney, and Francis Edderman did the same with what was probably a classic ‘Renaissance’ poem, *A Most Pithi and Plesant History Whear in is the Destrouction of Troye* (1558?). Sir Henry’s son, Sir Philip Sidney, accompanied his father on a tour of Munster in 1576 and he, of all Renaissance courtiers, must have brought to Ireland not only his books but his writing materials. The elusive John Derricke probably carried sketchbooks and writing materials as he moved around Ireland preparing his vituperative verses *The Image of Irelande, with a Discoverie of Woodkarne, Wherein is more Lively Expressed, the Nature, and Qualities of the said Wilde Irishe Woodkarne . . .* (1581). The town and country houses of Old English families such as the Stanihursts, the Usshers, the

Whites, the Plunketts, the Butlers, and the Barnewalls contained books that provided a grounding in Renaissance learning, later used to such good effect by the scions of such families in the law, scholarship, and the church.

Thus, by the end of the sixteenth century there was a well-established group of readers of ‘polite literature’ in Ireland, but there are only a few scattered references to the actual reading of such books. One of these is of particular interest though, as it refers to a woman as a reader. In 1599, Sir John Harington records finding, in the city of Galway, ‘a great lady, a young lady and a fair lady’ who had been forsaken by her husband, reading his recently published verse translation of Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*.<sup>1</sup> Harington introduces the anecdote with the words ‘My *Ariosto* has been entertained into Gallway before I came’, which suggests that the book might have been available for purchase in Galway—perhaps part of one of the consignments of books imported from England into the west of Ireland at this time.

The supposition that there was a market for Renaissance translations and verse in sixteenth-century Ireland, often imported from England into the larger Irish towns of Dublin, Cork, and Galway, is strengthened by the tantalizing record of the most elusive Irish printing of the age. In 1934 the bookseller Frank Marcham showed the American librarian William A. Jackson two sheets of a sixteenth-century Dublin printing of an English verse account of the fall of Troy. The fragments had apparently been removed from a binding and the first four lines of the verse were recorded. So was the title of the poem: *A Most Pithi and Plesant History Whear in is the Destrouction of Troye Gethered Togethere of all the Chyffeste Autores turned vnto Englyshe Myttere*. The poem appears to have been printed by Humphrey Powell for the author, Francis Edderman, and, since the dedication was to Sir Henry Sidney, who acted as Lord Justice in the absence of the fourth Earl of Sussex in 1558, this year was assigned to this Dublin printing. The fragments have, unfortunately, disappeared from view since 1934. It is, as Tony Sweeney has written, ‘the most tantalising of all sixteenth-century fragments of a “lost” Dublin book’ since there is no other record of any Dublin printing of a work of this nature until well into the next century.<sup>2</sup>

If Marcham and Jackson were right in their analysis, then one may suppose that there was, in Dublin in the late 1550s, an audience prepared to buy such a work. If verse on the fall of Troy was acceptable, why not other Renaissance texts, translations or originals? In fact, the first Dublin printing of a classic Renaissance text of *belles-lettres* is the 1621 folio printing of Sir Philip

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Harington, *Nugæ Antiquæ*, ed. Henry Harington, 2 vols. (London, 1804), i. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Tony Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word: A Short Descriptive Catalogue of Early Books, Pamphlets, Newsletters and Broadside Relating to Ireland 1475–1700* (Dublin: Eamon De Búrca, 1997), no. 1631. For the text see Andrew Carpenter (ed.), *Verses in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), 48.

Sidney's *The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, so that by this date there were clearly purchasers for such a book in Ireland. The dedication of the 1558 poem to Sir Henry Sidney suggests that Dublin Castle, during his time there as Lord Deputy, was a place where a poet writing in English could expect patronage. It seems likely that Sir Henry Sidney, like his later successors Sir Arthur Chichester and the Duke of Ormond, strove to make Dublin Castle a centre of culture even in the midst of the troubles of the age.<sup>3</sup>

Certainly when Edmund Spenser was in Dublin in the 1580s as secretary to the Lord Deputy, Lord Grey, he became part of a circle of cultivated men living in the city at the time who were in the habit of meeting to discuss ideas and writings among themselves. A particular friend of Spenser was a young Italian named Ludowick Bryskett, a protégé of Sir Henry Sidney and close companion of his son, Sir Philip Sidney. Bryskett wrote two elegies on the death of Sir Philip Sidney, which appeared in print with Spenser's own elegy on Philip Sidney. The elegies interweave in the way typical of other works produced in the coterie surrounding Sir Philip Sidney,<sup>4</sup> and it seems clear that the circle in which Spenser and Bryskett moved in Dublin was another such coterie. Bryskett gave a graphic account of the circle in action in his translation of the second part of Giraldi's *De gli Hacatommiti*, which he published as *A Discourse of Civill Life* (London, 1606). This work is cast in the form of a series of dialogues between three or four gentlemen during which the text is presented and discussed. Bryskett stated that 'the occasion of the discourse grew by the visitation of certaine gentlemen comming to me to my little cottage which I had newly built neare vnto Dublin'<sup>5</sup> and printed his translation as if it had been the subject of discussion between his friends at a three-day gathering at his cottage. Among the company, he writes, were 'Doctor Long Primate of Ardmagh, Sir Robert Dillon Knight, M. Dormer the Queenes Sollicitor, Capt. Christopher Carleil, Capt. Thomas Norreis, Capt Warham St Leger, Capt. Nicholas Dawtry, & Mr Edmond Spenser, late your Lordships Secretary, & Th. Smith, Apothecary'.<sup>6</sup> Early in the work, Spenser is asked by Bryskett to 'open vnto vs the goodly cabinet in which this excellent treasure of vertues lieth locked vp from the vulgar sort'—that is, to read part of his *Faerie Queene* to the company. Spenser courteously refuses and suggests that Bryskett's own translation of Giraldi would be the ideal text to be read

<sup>3</sup> See Raymond Gillespie, 'Dublin 1600–1700: A City and its Hinterlands', in Peter Clark and Bernard Lepetit (eds.), *Capital Cities and Their Hinterlands in Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 84–104, particularly 86.

<sup>4</sup> See H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts 1558–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Ludowick Bryskett, *A Discourse of Civill Life: Containing the Ethicke part of Morall Philosophie. Fit for the Instruction of a Gentleman in the Course of a Vertuous life* (London, 1606 [facsimile London, 1972]), 5.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 6. The person to whom the document was addressed ('your Lordship') was Lord Grey. See Pauline Henry, *Spenser in Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1928), 43.

to them: this is the excuse for Bryskett to introduce his translation and, indeed, for the whole book. Passages at the beginning of Spenser's *Colin Clout's Come Home Again* suggest that a similar coterie had formed around him at his newly acquired estates at Kilcolman, County Cork, in the mid-1580s. He portrayed Colin, the poet/shepherd of that poem, surrounded by fellow shepherds and shepherdesses, 'the shepherd nation'.<sup>7</sup> The eager questions of these friends and neighbours provide the excuse for the poem.

Clearly, Spenser took any available opportunity to discuss literature and ideas with those whom he met while in Ireland, and his accounts of literary meetings are pointers to the state of writing and publishing in late-sixteenth-century Ireland. Other writers active in Ireland around the same time must have felt the same need for books and for conversation with like-minded men. Bishop Thomas Lancaster of Kildare was writing *The Ryght and Trew Understandyng of the Supper of The Lord*—the first book written in English in Ireland—while serving as Bishop of Kildare during the reign of Edward VI. Barnaby Googe, who spent eleven years in Ireland managing the estates of Sir William Cecil (1574–85), during which he made his important translation of Conrad Heresbach's *Four Bookes of Husbandrie* (into which he inserted his own translations of passages from Virgil's *Georgics*), also seems likely to have completed a verse translation of a Latin poem on the gout. It is certain that Googe had books to help with his translations and, like most translators, he sought guidance from other scholars on difficult passages—or, indeed, help from neighbouring farmers or sufferers from gout. The fact that he dedicated his translation of Heresbach to the Lord Deputy, Sir William Fitzwilliam, suggests, again, that writers moved between the country and the court during the period.

Another house where books were to be found was that of the Nugents in County Westmeath. The clearest evidence of this is Richard Nugent's slim volume of verse, *Rich: Nugents Cynthia. Containing Direfull Sonnets, Madrigalls, and Passionate Intercourses, Describing his Repudiate Affections Expressed in Loues Owne Language* (London, 1604). Richard Nugent was the son of Nicholas Nugent, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, who had been wrongly convicted of treason and hanged in 1582. Richard's work shows an intimate acquaintance with the kind of verse being written at this time in London. However, even if he had visited London, Richard had fallen in love in Westmeath, and had been rejected. He felt, therefore, that he had to leave Ireland and move to what he describes as 'an vncouth land'. Within *Cynthia* there are also sonnets exchanged between the poet and his cousin Master Richard Nugent of Dunower, near Multifarnham. Nugent was a poet of considerable skill and it is worth quoting here a fine sonnet in which he laments

<sup>7</sup> *Colin Clout's Come Home Again*, line 17.

his departure from Ireland for England:

Fare-well sweete Isle, within whose pleasant Bowres,  
 I first receiued life, and liuing ayre,  
 Fare-well the soile, where grew those heau'nly flowers,  
 which brauely decke the face of my fierce faire,  
 Fare-well the place, whence I beheld the towres,  
 with pale aspect, where her I saw repaire:  
 Fare-well ye floods, encreased by those showres,  
 wherewith mine eyes did entertaine despaire:  
 Fare-well cleare lake, which of art made the glasse  
 to rarest beautie, of mine ill the roote,  
 When she vouchsafes vpon thy shores to passe,  
 blessing thy happie sand, with thy faire foote  
 Fare-well faire *Cynthia*, whose vnkind consent  
 hath caus'd mine euerlasting banishment.<sup>8</sup>

This is the first published poem about Ireland in English by an Irish-born poet.

### 1600–1660

The quality of life changed considerably in Ireland after the Battle of Kinsale in 1601. Traditional Irish society was gradually dismantled as the King's writ was enforced throughout the country and as New English planters replaced the Old English and the native Irish. Young men from the native and Old English communities went abroad to be educated—many to continental Europe, though the older tradition of training at the Inns of Courts in England continued. If these young men brought back books with them when they returned to Ireland, these are likely to have been Counter-Reformation materials in Latin or books on the law, but romances and books of verse were probably brought back to Ireland as well.<sup>9</sup> The founding of Trinity College in the 1590s and the purchase of books for its library marks the beginning of institutional buying in Ireland. However, since access to the library was normally confined to senior members of the university, the impact of the university on the reading habits of ordinary Dubliners was then, as now, minimal.

<sup>8</sup> *Rich: Nugent's Cynthia* (London, 1604, ESTC S110185), sonnet XI, sig. D1. 'Thy' in line 12 is probably a misprint for 'her'. For other sonnets by Nugent, see Carpenter (ed.), *Verse in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland*, 125–7.

<sup>9</sup> See Raymond Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 9–11.



Remarkably few works of literature were actually printed or reprinted in Ireland in the early seventeenth century and much of the demand for literary work was met by imports. There were, however, Dublin reprintings of works that had appeared in London, notably *The Countess of Sidney's Arcadia* in 1621, pamphlets concerning the Thomas Overbury affair in 1626, and Thomas Randolph's translation of Aristippus in 1635. However, there is only a handful of first printings of apparently original works. One of these was *A Short Discourse of the New-found-land: Containing Diverse Reasons and Inducements for the Planting of that Country* (1623), another the first book of Irish case law—a set of judgements by Sir John Davies in law French<sup>10</sup>—and another a scornful description of St Patrick's Purgatory (1632?). Otherwise, the principal original works printed in Dublin were from the pens of the two great Irish humanist scholars of the age, James Ussher and James Ware. Their books found some readers in Ireland but they were more widely consulted overseas, and both men wrote more in Latin than in English precisely because works in Latin would reach an international audience.<sup>11</sup>

We have little concrete evidence of literary activity in or around Dublin during the first half of the seventeenth century. One survival is of interest, though, as the only such text connected with the Lords Deputy of the reign of James I. The English poet George Wither, who spent some time in Dublin attached to the household of the Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester, wrote an elaborate poem to be recited or performed at the wedding of Sir Francis Willoughby and Lady Cassandra Ridgeway that took place at Rathfarnham on the last Tuesday in October 1610.<sup>12</sup> Presumably, however, a work such as this did not exist in a vacuum and there must have been other similar pieces written and performed but, unfortunately, none reached the Dublin press and all trace of them has been lost. By the 1620s and 1630s, there was considerable intellectual and literary activity in Dublin. The poet Francis Quarles spent time in Dublin as secretary to the Archbishop of Armagh,<sup>13</sup> and there were other young men who spent time in the city in similar positions. It seems likely that, together with their employers or patrons, they met to discuss literary matters and to exchange drafts of translations or other writings. There was also sufficient literary activity in Trinity College to produce a substantial volume of elegies on the death of the Countess of Cork in 1630. Two of the English poems in this volume,

<sup>10</sup> *Le Primer Report des Cases & Matters en Ley Resolves & Adjudges en les Courts del Roy en Ireland* (Dublin, 1615, ESTC S10736).

<sup>11</sup> Another member of the Ussher family, Ambrose, was author of *A Brief Catechism* (Dublin, 1620, ESTC S95641) as well as a number of manuscript works.

<sup>12</sup> See Carpenter (ed.), *Verse in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland*, 135–8.

<sup>13</sup> The introduction to Quarles's 1629 translation of *Argalus and Parthenia* (ESTC S112006), a verse paraphrase of a story in *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, gives Dublin as his place of residence.

*Musarum Lachrymae*, demonstrate considerable skill, though their authors, Dudley Boswell and George Brady, are otherwise unknown as poets.

One example of printed verse is 'Mount Taragh's Triumph', the earliest surviving Dublin-printed verse broadsheet. 'Mount Taragh's Triumph' appeared on the streets of Dublin as negotiations between the Catholic gentry and the King over the terms of the Graces were under way. The text is full of ironies, the most potent of which is that the poet places the assembly for negotiating the terms not in Dublin Castle—the symbol of New English rule in Ireland—but at the Hill of Tara in County Meath, the traditional centre of Ireland, home of the high kings and the place where assemblies met in pre-Norman Ireland. The verse is designed for singing to an air called 'The Careere', so presumably the authorities hoped that this piece of loyalist propaganda would be sung in the alehouses and taverns of the city to remind the lords and commons of their political loyalties. Other ballads concerning Ireland, for instance two about disasters in the city of Cork, were London-printed and designed for a London audience.<sup>14</sup> In general, there is no evidence to show the streets of Dublin alive with the vigorous and bawdy ballad culture so common in the streets of London at this time, until well after 1660.

However, there is evidence, in both manuscript and printed form, of people living outside Dublin who chose to express themselves in English verse during the first half of the seventeenth century. The planter Parr Lane wrote a very long poem entitled 'Newes from the Holy Ile', which expresses many of the fears of the incoming settlers and was intended for the eyes of the Dublin authorities, alerting them, among other things, to the danger faced by planters living in isolated and unprotected dwellings.<sup>15</sup> Poems of this length and complexity do not exist in a vacuum and it is certain that Lane, and others like him, had access to books. Lane also expected his neighbours as well as the Dublin authorities to read the poem and it was probably 'scribally published', copied and circulated in manuscript. Others whose poems were probably circulated in manuscript include a disgraced English soldier named Edward Bletso, who wrote some lively poems about life in the north of Ireland,<sup>16</sup> and Lady Ann Southwell, who

<sup>14</sup> *A Battell of Birds Most Strangely Fought in Ireland vpon the Eight day of September last, 1621. Where Neere unto the City of Corke, by the River Lee, Weare Gathered Together such a Multytude of Stares, or Starlings, as the Like for Number, was Never Seene in any Age* (London, 1621, ESTC S125206), and *The Lamentable Burning of the City of Corke (in the Province of Munster in Ireland) by Lightning: which Happened the Last of May, 1622. After a Prodigious Battell of the Stares which Fought most Strangely over and Neere that Citty, the 12 and 14 of May. 1621* (London, 1621, ESTC S108693). The second of these is not only a description of a serious catastrophe but also a sober call to repentance.

<sup>15</sup> See Carpenter (ed.), *Verses in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland*, 139–47; Alan Ford (ed.), 'Parr Lane, "Newes from the Holy Ile"', *PRLA*, 90C (1999), 115–56.

<sup>16</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Rawl. poet 96, f. 248.

lived not far from Limerick, and addressed verse letters to a number of her friends and neighbours.<sup>17</sup>

As the country slid into war after 1641, literary texts became a luxury that few could afford. However, some interesting material of a more literary kind concerning Ireland survives in English-printed and manuscript items. This suggests that people in Ireland were still reading and passing printed and manuscript material to each other. A poet who claimed to have had his goods plundered by the native Irish during the early 1640s wrote an unusual poem entitled *A Looking-Glasse of the World, or, the Plundered Man in Ireland—His Voyage, his Observation of the Beasts of the Field, of the Fishes of the Sea, of the Fowles of the Aire, of the Severall Professions of Men &c.* (London, 1644). The poem includes extended poetic descriptions of seventeenth-century animals—domestic and wild—as well as of human occupations. Creatures described include all farm animals, snails, frogs, toads, pigeons, owls, and parrots, and the human trades include those of soldier, lawyer, divine, and husbandman.

Throughout the 1640s, the first Duke of Ormond and his secretary, George Lane, kept the verse received in the Duke's office. This manuscript verse sheds much light on contemporary politics.<sup>18</sup> The poets, with few exceptions, are known only through the verses they sent to Ormond, but they considered it appropriate to send political advice and comments on the political situation to the Lord Lieutenant in the form of a verse letter. Among these is a long poem by one Thomas Cobbes, which bears the lively, if perhaps over-explanatory, title 'A Poeme upon Cromuell and his Archtrayterous Rabble of Rebellious Racailles and England's Jaolebirds, levelled and arranged nowe together, with a compendious runninge over of Great Britaine's present deplorable state, and a more ample description of Irelandes auncient, late, more moderne and nowe imminent condition, if the Inhabitaunts thereof (as beneath exhorted) doe not unanimously and seriously addresse themselves to defend their auncient Religion, their kinge, their countrey, the pristine Rights, lawes and customes of their countrey, their wives, their cheildren and their owne Lands and Personall Estates'. Even if printing was at a low ebb in the Ireland of the 1640s and 1650s, writing was not. The circulation of manuscript works may not have reached as wide an audience as that of print, but its readership was much more carefully targeted.

As Ireland moved through the Commonwealth period, virtually all that was printed was of an official nature. However, a clergyman from County Cavan who was residing in England, Faithfull Teate, published one of the finest long religious poems of the age. Teate was a graduate of Trinity College

<sup>17</sup> Jean Klene (ed.), *The Southwell-Sibthorp Commonplace Book*, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, vol. 147 (Tempe, Ariz., 1997).

<sup>18</sup> For details of this manuscript, see Andrew Carpenter, 'A Collection of Verse Presented to James Butler, first Duke of Ormond', *Yale University Library Gazette*, 75 (1–2) (2000), 64–70.

and father of the more famous Nahum Tate. The father's poem was entitled *Ter Tria: or the Doctrine of the Three Sacred Persons, Father, Son, & Spirit. Principal Graces, Faith, Hope, and Love. Main Duties, Prayer, Hearing, and Meditation. Summarily Digested for the Pleasure and Profit of the Pious and Ingenious Reader* (London, 1568). This rich and original metaphysical, meditative poem on the Trinity, on the three graces, and on the three duties of man is a poetic *tour de force*. Teate's images of writing are of particular interest:

My Pen is but a feather's vanity,  
 Like me that write;  
 Yet shall this feather,  
 If thou't indite,  
 Help me fly thither  
 Where Angels wings make Pens beyond the sky.  
 Father, mine Inkes dark hue presents mine heart.  
 Ink's not more dark,  
 Ink's not more black;  
 One beam, one sparke  
 Supply this lack.  
 Father of Lights, now shew thy perfect Art

Such verse shows clearly that writing and reading were part of the life of some of those who thought of Ireland as their home.

### 1660–1690

The restoration of Charles II in 1660 marks the beginning of a new age for cultural, as well as political, life in Ireland. In Dublin, the high point of the celebrations surrounding the Restoration was the mass consecration of bishops and archbishops in St Patrick's Cathedral. The anthem sung on that occasion, the words of which were written by the dean, William Fuller, and published in Dublin, included the memorable lines:

Angels look down, and Joy to see  
 Like that above, a Monarchie.  
 Angels look down, and Joy to see  
 Like that above, an Hierarchie.<sup>19</sup>

Among the congregation in the cathedral to hear that anthem was the incoming Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Ormond. The vice-regal household was a cultured one and the Lord Lieutenant and his wife numbered several writers

<sup>19</sup> BL, Thomason tracts 669 f.26.(61).

among their friends. We have substantial evidence that these writers constituted an active poetic coterie. They gave each other fanciful poetic names, exchanged poems with each other, and behaved just as similar coterie had done in aristocratic circles in England. Irish writers in the group included members of the Boyle families, the Earl and Countess of Roscommon, Lady Ormond herself, and the Welsh poet, Katherine Philips, who spent some time in Dublin in the early 1660s. One public manifestation of its activities was the staging of Katherine Philips's play *Pompey*, a version of that by Corneille. The writings of the coterie also spilled from the intimacy of the circle of intimates into the wider world when the Dublin bookseller Samuel Dancer somehow obtained copies of some of the verses circulating and published them under the title of *Poems by Several Persons* (1663).<sup>20</sup> Katherine Phillips wrote to her friend Sir George Cottrell:

I intend to send you by the first Opportunity a Miscellaneous Collection of Poems printed here; among which, to fill up the Number of his Sheets, and as a Foil to others, the Printer has thought fit, tho' without my Consent or Privity, to publish two or three Poems of mine, that had been stolen from me.<sup>21</sup>

This book was just one of scores that suddenly appeared in the bookshops of Dublin in the early 1660s as the more settled state of the country and the influence of a literary court led to a rapid increase in the purchase and reading of books. An insight into that world of books is provided by Mary Pollard's analysis of fragments of the daybook of the Dublin bookseller Samuel Helsham for the period March–May 1685.<sup>22</sup> During these two months, Helsham handled sixty-three different titles, dispatching many of them to clients in the country. Though 65 per cent of his sales comprised Protestant devotional works, textbooks, and topical works such as news sheets, Helsham also sold literature including a volume of the poems of George Herbert and individual poems by John Dryden, Richard Duke, and Aphra Behn, a poem called the 'Quaker's Elegy', the fables of Aesop and Raleigh's *History of the World*. Helsham's customers were mainly clergymen, but his was only one of a number of Dublin bookshops at this time, and other poems and pamphlets of many kinds were circulating both through bookshops and through coffee houses. Booksellers only stock what can be sold at a profit and, in the Ireland of the 1680s, profit could evidently be made from verse as well as from sermons.

Towards the end of the reign of Charles II, the Popish Plot became the catalyst for bitter sectarian dispute that continued, in both England and Ireland, into the reign of his brother, James II. Catholic and Protestant were

<sup>20</sup> The book—of which only a single copy is extant—was printed by the King's Printer, John Crooke.

<sup>21</sup> *Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus* (London, 1705, ESTC T75101), 146.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 227–52.

polarized in Ireland and violent animosities came to the surface in print. An interesting example of this is a satirical poem, *The Irish Hudibras or Fingallian Prince*. This long poem in rhyming tetrameters travesties, fairly accurately and fairly consistently, the sixth book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the book in which Aeneas descends into hell. The idea of using the text of the *Aeneid* as a template for a poem of satirical comment on current events originated in France with Paul Scarron's *Le Virgile Travesty en Vers Burlesque* (1648); it was transferred into English by Charles Cotton, whose *Scarronides: or Virgile Travestie* (1664) was a popular text in Restoration England where its similarity to Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* (1663) was immediately noted. *The Irish Hudibras*—which neatly links Butler's poem to the Scarron/Cotton tradition in its title—though it ridicules Catholics where Butler ridiculed Presbyterians—is the only one dealing with Ireland. It derides the speech, behaviour, and beliefs of the native Irish and the Old English, particularly those living just north of Dublin in the area known as Fingal. What makes this poem unusual is that versions of it were circulating, in Ireland and in manuscript, probably within a Dublin coterie, for at least twenty years before it was printed in London in 1689.<sup>23</sup> Secondly, the manuscripts and the printed text are provided with extensive marginal notes that explain uncommon Irish or Hiberno-English words and, at the foot of each page, give the Latin lines from the *Aeneid* that correspond to the text above. There are also notes throughout referring to learned 'sources'. The texts cited are in Latin and Irish as well as in English and include printed works on Ireland by Giraldus Cambrensis, Holinshed, and Philip O'Sullivan Beare as well as manuscript Irish genealogies and chronicles.<sup>24</sup> It seems certain, therefore, that the author or authors of *The Irish Hudibras* had access to all manner of texts on Ireland in several languages and felt the need to annotate their own poem so that it could be read by those with no knowledge of Ireland. The group were bookish men, certainly Protestants, familiar with the life and language of Fingal. Their learned spoof of Virgil may have started as no more than a verse joke at the expense of their Catholic neighbours, but by the time James II landed in Ireland and the Protestant cause looked likely to fail, the poem had a more serious purpose. It was sent to London to be printed in the hope that it might do harm to the Irish, Catholic cause among a wider audience. The poem suggests the uses to which book-learning could be put in Ireland just before the Battle of the Boyne.

<sup>23</sup> The earlier of these is 'Purgatorium Hibernicum: or the Sixt Booke of Virgills Æneis: Travestie Burlesque a la mode de Fingaule', NLI, MS 470; the later one is 'The Fingallian Travesty or the Sixt Book of Virgills Æneids a la mode de Fingaule', BL, MS Sloane 900.

<sup>24</sup> The work of Giraldus Cambrensis concerning Ireland, *Topographia Hiberniae* (c.1187) is translated by John J. O'Meara as *The History and Topography of Ireland* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982); Richard Stanishurst wrote the Irish sections of Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (London, 1577); Philip O'Sullivan Beare's *Historiae Catholicae Hiberniae Compendium* was printed in Lisbon in 1621.

## 1690–1800

From 1690 onwards, the amount of information available to us about those who printed, sold, and read books in Ireland increases dramatically—as dramatically as did the habit of reading in Ireland.<sup>25</sup> Some books were still imported, of course, but much of the market was supplied from local printing. Clearly, reading became a significant and a respectable leisure activity in the eighteenth century. The quantity and range of material produced in Ireland reflected not only an increasingly literate, book-buying public but also the fact that English copyright laws were not applied in Ireland. Thus Ireland could be used to print literary works for which no copyright payment had to be paid, and the ‘reprint’ industry exported large numbers of books to the Continent and to the expanding market of America. Once the reading of fiction became a popular activity, the market for books expanded everywhere, and one of the disputes between London and Dublin printers in the eighteenth century concerned who owned what rights in Dublin reprints of the novels of the immensely popular Samuel Richardson.<sup>26</sup>

There is a glimpse of the state of the Dublin book trade and its clients in the pages of *The Dublin Scuffle*, a lively account by the London bookseller John Dunton of his visit to Ireland in 1698. Dunton brought with him, he tells us, ‘near *Ten Tun*’ of books from his London warehouse, which he intended to sell in Dublin by auction. Though Dunton was a rogue and an unashamed self-publicist whose texts must be read with some caution, a recently found and probably unique surviving advertisement for his Dublin sales promises an astonishing range and quantity of material:

about a Thousand *Folio*’s, 6000 *Quarto*es, and 12000 *Octavo*es and *Twelves*, on the following Heads, *Viz. Divinity, History, Philosophy, Poetry, Travels, Plays, Romances, Novels, Musick, Law, Physick, Chyrurgery, Architecture, Navigation, Geometry, Astronomy: The Military Art, Fortification, Merchandize, Painting, Drawing, Limning, Horsemanship, Cookery, Preserving, Candyng, Husbandry, Gardening, Bibles* (in all Volumns,) and *School-Books*. To which will be added a curious Collection of *Pamphlets*, in about 200 Volumns; containing *Sermons, Lives, Characters, Confessions*, and Scarce *Miscellanies* of all sorts—As also *Fifty Manuscripts* on various Subjects. The *Catalogues* will be given *Gratis* by the Booksellers in *Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galloway, Clonmel, and Londonderry*.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See Toby Barnard, ‘Reading in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Public and Private Pleasures’, in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 60–77.

<sup>26</sup> Pollard, *Dublin’s Trade in Books*, 88–90.

<sup>27</sup> I am grateful to Dr Stephen Parks, Curator of the Beinecke Rare Book collection at Yale University, for bringing this advertisement to my attention. He found it on the final leaf of a recently purchased copy of Dunton’s *Essay Proving we Shall Know our Friends in Heaven* (London, 1698, ESTC R17080).

Whether Dunton's sales actually included all this material or not, his list gives an insight into the kind of reading material that was available in Ireland, from other sources if not from his auctions, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The first part of the list, before the colon, gives the categories of books likely to be bought by the clergy, the gentry, members of Parliament, or senior officials. Surviving library lists and book subscription lists confirm that a 'gentleman's' library was likely to contain books in most of these categories. After the colon, the list covers topics more appealing to engineers, to tradesmen of all kinds, and to women, who—if Dunton's list is to be believed—were well catered for by practical handbooks and whom he expected at his auctions. It seems that Irish women may have been reading not only the novels, poetry, plays, and romances, which are traditionally assigned to them, but also books on specific aspects of housekeeping and on leisure pursuits. Elsewhere in *The Dublin Scuffle*,<sup>28</sup> Dunton gives the titles of some of the books he says he had for sale. The majority of the titles and authors are connected with divinity and religious controversy, but there is also a substantial number of titles of a literary nature. These include the works of Shakespeare, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Cowley, Oldham, Dryden, Congreve, Blackmore, Locke, and Boyle, among others. There are also popular works like L'Estrange's translation of Aesop and Seneca's *Morals*, as well as a large number of 'dictionaries', some of which are word lists and others rudimentary encyclopedias. Dunton made a specific attempt to attract those living in provincial centres, and informed them, in a parallel passage in *The Dublin Scuffle*, that 'those who live at a distance may send their commissions to their relatives in Dublin, or to my friend Mr Richard Wilde, and they shall have their orders faithfully executed.'<sup>29</sup>

Literacy increased after 1690 as growing numbers of schools were started, in Dublin particularly, but elsewhere in the Pale also, for girls as well as for boys.<sup>30</sup> Classical texts were edited, printed, and published in Ireland and scholarship flourished in a minor way.<sup>31</sup> Schoolmasters prepared their best boy pupils for entry to Trinity College, Dublin, and also encouraged learning for its own sake. Thomas Sheridan's Dublin school was famous for putting on plays in classical languages, and Samuel White was able to put

The advertisement is paraphrased at the beginning of *The Dublin Scuffle* though some categories of book, notably those concerned with cooking and housekeeping, are absent there. See the recent edition, ed. Andrew Carpenter (Dublin, 2000), 17.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 80–1.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>30</sup> For an entertaining description of girls on their way home from school in Dublin in the 1730s, see John Winstanley's poem 'Miss Betty's Singing-Bird', in Andrew Carpenter (ed.), *Verses in English from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998), 271–3.

<sup>31</sup> George Grierson issued a substantial series of small-format classical texts (said to have been edited by his learned wife, the poet Constantia Grierson) between 1724 and 1732, and the Trinity College Press published finely printed editions edited by James Hawkey in the middle of the century.



together and publish a substantial volume of verse in English written by pupils of both sexes at his well-known school on Grafton Street.<sup>32</sup> Literacy spread rapidly and sales of topical pamphlets and broadside verses were a major source of income for many booksellers. Poets expected to publish their poems almost as soon as they were written, and some literary and political disputes took place on the noticeboards of coffee houses.

It is hard to overestimate the importance and influence of Jonathan Swift in the world of publishing and letters in eighteenth-century Dublin. *The Drapier's Letters*, *A Modest Proposal*, *The Intelligencer*, and the many verse and prose pamphlets he published in Dublin in the 1720s and 1730s made Swift a national hero. Among others, he strove to manipulate public opinion through pamphlets and broadsides. In doing so, he took advantage of the city's almost insatiable appetite for printed material and raised the profile of those who printed and published his works in Ireland—most famously George Faulkner. Swift chose Faulkner to print and publish his *Collected Works* in 1735 and himself corrected the sheets as they went through the press. Faulkner's printings of Swift's texts, thus, had a particular authority that Faulkner exploited as fully as he could. Faulkner's edition of Swift was always in print, and by the 1770s it contained 20 volumes. His status as a publisher of literary editions was heightened by his editions of the works of Alexander Pope—to which he himself added original notes—and of major works such as his immense *History of the World*. The prestige of being Swift's publisher made Faulkner the most significant Dublin publisher of the century and also raised the status of Dublin printing and publishing.

Swift was also important as an influence on other writers. In the late 1720s and 1730s, he was at the centre of a group of writers who met regularly to discuss their writings and to scrutinize them before they were printed. Members of this group included Patrick Delany, Mary Barber, Constantia Grierson, and Matthew Pilkington.<sup>33</sup> In classic coterie fashion, poems circulated in the group and members felt free to make additions and alterations as they saw fit. If the verses from this group were printed, it was often with the helping hand of the Dean of St Patrick's.<sup>34</sup> Lesser poets attached to Trinity College, like William Dunkin, or those attached to Dublin Castle, like Ambrose Philips, came under Swift's influence. Scores of others wrote verse

<sup>32</sup> *The Shamrock: or Hibernian Cresses. A Collection of Poems, Songs, Epigrams, &c, Latin as well as English, the Original Production of Ireland* ... [edited by] Samuel Whyte, Principal of the English Grammar School (Dublin, 1772, ESTC N5220).

<sup>33</sup> For a discussion of the coterie surrounding Swift, see A. C. Elias Jr., 'Senatus Consultum: Revising Verse in Swift's Dublin circle 1729–1735', in Hermann J. Real and Helgard Stöver-Leidig (eds.), *Reading Swift: Papers from the Third Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1998), 249–67.

<sup>34</sup> This is particularly true of Mary Barber's *Poems on Several Occasions* (London, 1734, ESTC T42622). Swift wrote a preface for the book and sent letters to friends urging them to subscribe.

letters to each other.<sup>35</sup> Such poems might appear as separate pamphlets or be included in collections such as *Poems Written Occasionally by John Winstanley . . . Interspers'd with Many Others . . . by Several Ingenious Hands* (Dublin, 1742). This anthology, like its 1751 sequel, provides a glimpse into the literary world of Dublin in the middle of the century, the city a hive of literary activity, a place where poets rushed into print every day and where poetry was widely read. Many women also ventured into print in volumes of verse published by subscription. Ireland was, in the middle of the eighteenth century, a paradise for writers of verse, and Dublin was generally acknowledged to be a city in which the book and writing were held in high esteem.<sup>36</sup>

In general, literary activity in Ireland during the eighteenth century—writing, publishing, and reading—was of bewildering variety. As the century progressed, books of many kinds were produced in the provinces, most of which reflected the taste of the capital. These included devotional books, chapbooks, primers, and materials of local interest. In Cork, a surprising number of books of Catholic interest were printed<sup>37</sup> and successful printers produced books in Limerick, Newry, Belfast, and many other centres. These were sold mainly to those living in the area where they were produced. However, a different kind of material was produced by some provincial printers during the 1780s and 1790s. This was verse of a very rough and unsophisticated kind, printed in small, fragile chapbooks, sometimes called ‘garlands’, cheaply and often clumsily produced on coarse paper with badly set type. Although the language of the verse is English, the chapbooks are clearly printed by and for people for whom Irish was a first language. Those who wrote this verse certainly had a considerable knowledge of spoken English, but little experience of traditional English verse. The metres in which they wrote were the Irish *amhrán* or song metres that rely on assonance rather than on end-rhyme (like English verse) for their poetic effect. Thus these poets would sometimes select a word for its sound or metrical value rather than for its meaning. Some of the songs they wrote are comic or bawdy, but others tell of hopeless love, of forced emigration, or of unhappy marriages. Most of the chapbooks in which these songs occur were printed in towns such as Monaghan, Limerick, Newry, Tralee, and Wexford during the last twenty years of the century, though there are some from Dublin also. The chapbooks would be sold to chapmen who would then hawk them around the towns and

<sup>35</sup> See for example the poetic exchanges between Delany and Swift in Carpenter (ed.), *Verse in English from Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 166–81.

<sup>36</sup> For further examples of verse letters, see Olivia Elder’s poem ‘To Mrs D.C.H., an account of the author’s manner of spending her time’ and ‘To Sarah Shackleton, on her beating me with a bed-stick’ by Mary Shackleton, in Carpenter (ed.), *Verse in English from Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 343–6 and 368–9; also Mary Barber’s *Poems*.

<sup>37</sup> See Hugh Fenning, ‘Cork Imprints of Catholic Historical Interest 1723–1804: A Provisional Check-List’, *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 100 (1995), 129–48.

through the countryside. Whereas the Irish-language tradition had been one of manuscript and oral transmission, these songs in English, or in a mixture of English and Irish, were transmitted in printed form. Only a few score of these provincially printed chapbooks survive, but they represent a radically different kind of eighteenth-century Irish writing from that originating in the middle-class environment of the cities. They come from the moment of interaction between the two main languages and cultures of eighteenth-century Ireland, and are one of the remarkable survivals of the age.<sup>38</sup>

For other authors seeking to get their writing into print, publishing books by subscription became a widely used option after about 1735. An author would solicit subscriptions for a proposed volume and, when sufficient money had been received to pay the printer, would proceed to publish. Outstanding subscriptions, collected after publication, might bring the author a modest profit. The system had the advantage of requiring no capital outlay by a bookseller or publisher, and it led to an assortment of publications. Many bordered on the charity performance; for example, John Burns of Monaghan, who was ‘born Deaf and Dumb’, managed to secure over 1,000 subscriptions for his 1775 publication (‘printed for the author’) *An Historical and Chronological Remembrancer of all Remarkable Occurrences from the Creation to this Present Year of our Lord 1775*. All the great and the good of Ireland, from the Lord Lieutenant to a Mrs Gould and a Miss Harrison, paid their subscriptions and so became ‘generous benefactors’ whose liberality enabled Burns to pass the remainder of his days ‘as comfortably as his Situation will admit of’. In an age when there was no public support for those unfortunate enough to find themselves with no income, the book published by subscription was an important safeguard. Women writers were active as well as men. For most of them, publication by subscription was the only way of getting into print, and their works could appear in very small editions—there were only forty copies, for instance, of *Poems by Ellen Taylor, the Irish Cottager* (Dublin, 1792). Other women writers working in Ireland, Henrietta Battier and some of those who took up the writing of fiction, became popular enough to make money for their publishers.<sup>39</sup>

Eighteenth-century Irish publishers and booksellers were constantly finding ways of stimulating the local market. One way was to produce magazines and journals. Some of these were reprints of London works. Dublin reprints of *The Spectator*, *The Tatler*, and *The Guardian* all appeared in 1728, and further editions of these and other London periodicals appeared until the 1770s.

<sup>38</sup> For a fuller account of chapbook verse and several examples, see Carpenter (ed.), *Verse in English from Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 6–23, 387–404, and 500–22.

<sup>39</sup> See also the lists of books published by subscription appended to Máire Kennedy, ‘Women and Reading in Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, in Cunningham and Kennedy (eds.), *The Experience of Reading*, 78–98.

Bound sets of these works were often given as gifts and many of the diaries and letters of Irishwomen refer to them. A popular periodical was Eliza Haywood's *The Female Spectator*, of which a Dublin edition appeared in 1748. Haywood's later works, for instance *The Parrot* and *Epistles for Ladies* (both subtitled 'by the authors of *The Female Spectator*'), testify to the popularity of this type of material. Men and women all over Ireland read these journals from which were formed, to a considerable extent, the tastes and mores of the rising middle class.<sup>40</sup> Between 1740 and 1800 at least sixty new, home-produced Irish periodicals appeared, the majority of them in Dublin but others in provincial centres. Some of these covered serious topics, particularly in the field of Irish antiquities.<sup>41</sup> *Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis* (first issue 1770), edited by the eccentric Major Charles Vallancey, concerned itself with Irish antiquities; the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* (first issue 1787) made public the investigations of members of the academy, and included a section on the antiquities of Ireland; and *Anthologia Hibernica*, though it only ran from 1792 to 1794, did much to boost the cultural confidence of late-eighteenth-century Dublin and published, among other things, the earliest verses of the young Tom Moore. Towards the end of the century, there was a middle-class market ready for monthly magazines like those available in England. In 1785 Joseph Walker started a monthly magazine generally known as *Walker's Hibernian Magazine or Compendium of Entertaining Knowledge*. This substantial publication, which included fold-out engravings in most issues, contained essays on many topics, selections from literature, comments on the Dublin theatre, original poetry, a summary of events in Europe and England for the preceding month, notification of public events in Ireland (including a summary of parliamentary news), and notices of marriages, deaths, and military promotions. During the American Revolution, and again at the time of the 1798 rising, this publication provided considerable coverage of events and personalities. The magazine continued until 1811 and provided its readers with a remarkably comprehensive and surprisingly accurate view of events in Ireland and abroad as well as articles on more serious matters. It was very popular and well represents the level of ordinary intellectual and social life in Ireland at the time.

<sup>40</sup> The fullest account of the influence of journals on taste in eighteenth-century England is John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Longmans, 1997), particularly 100–8. Brewer's remarks about their influence in the English provinces (Ch. 12) are, to some extent, relevant to the Irish situation.

<sup>41</sup> Interest in the Irish past also appeared in many works of polite literature printed during the century. Sarah Butler was one of the first to seek to bridge the gap between the two main cultures of Ireland in *Irish Tales or Instructive Histories for the Happy Conduct of Life* to which was prefixed a treatise on 'the learning and politeness of the antient Irish'. Although this was first printed in London in 1716 (ESTC T119241), the 1735 edition (ESTC T167049) was printed in both London and Dublin; by 1789, Charlotte Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry* was published only in Dublin.

Encyclopedias were also popular and perhaps the most impressive piece of Irish printing of the century is the eighteen-volume quarto printing, by James Moore, one of the few Catholic printers of eighteenth-century Ireland, of a new edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* for which, Moore boasted, all the 542 copper plates had been newly engraved in Dublin. This was to be the grandest and most prestigious publication ever conceived in Ireland, as Moore's prospectus promised:

The Work will be printed in a superb style, suitable to the spirit and taste of the Irish Nation: the paper will be superfine and the types occasionally renewed, before they contract a worn appearance . . . To record the Patrons of Literature in Ireland, and hand down their names to posterity as encouragers of a work of such magnitude and celebrity, a book continues open to enter the names of Subscribers in, which will be printed and prefixed to the work, but no Money required until the delivery of each Volume.

It took Moore, who described himself as 'the printer, Publisher and sole Proprietor' of the encyclopedia, seven years to complete it. When he did so, he was justifiably proud of his achievement, dedicating it to the King and including with the final volume an engraved frontispiece showing all the arts and sciences flourishing in Ireland. In its confident bulk, this work is a fitting monument to the eighteenth-century Irish book of polite literature and to its dedicated readers.

# Theatre and Print, 1550–1800

*Christopher Morash*

## William Smith Goes to the Theatre

There is no way of reconstructing precisely the movements of Dublin book-seller William Smith on the afternoon and evening of Thursday, 28 July 1743. He may have spent the afternoon in his shop on the main thoroughfare of Dame Street—a familiar Dublin landmark with its sign of Hercules over the door. It is equally possible, however, that as a leading Irish seller of plays, he went to the theatre to see a production of Joseph Addison's *Cato*. If so, on that particular afternoon he may have left the shop in the care of his son, also named William Smith, who had just been admitted to the booksellers' Guild of St Luke. Before leaving the shop, he would probably have checked his stock for a copy of Addison's play in an edition that had been printed for him in 1736.<sup>1</sup> He almost certainly would have found the play on his shelves, for his son was still listing the play as being available from the firm almost thirty years later. He may also have moved to a more prominent location in the shop the more expensive three-volume edition of Addison's *Miscellaneous Works* that had been printed for him in 1735, the first volume of which contained the script of *Cato*.<sup>2</sup>

In any case, when William Smith stepped out into Dame Street, he would have had more than usual reason to expect that he might sell a few copies of *Cato* that day. Two weeks earlier, a young actor and former Trinity student, Thomas Sheridan, had caused a public outcry when he sent the audience home after refusing to appear in the title role. Arriving at the theatre in Smock Alley on 14 July 1743, Sheridan had discovered that both the musicians and his costume were missing (the former had not been paid; the latter

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Addison, *Cato, A Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane, by His Majesty's Servants* (Dublin, 1736, ESTC T184489).

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Addison, *Miscellaneous Works, in Verse and Prose, of the Late Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq. With Some Account of the Life and Writings of the Author by Mr. Tickell*. Dublin, 3 vols. (Dublin, 1735, ESTC T039439).

had been stolen). Theophilus Cibber, an older actor in the theatre (who was reputedly jealous of the meteoric rise of the young Sheridan) was less than sympathetic to Sheridan's plight. 'When I asked him what I should do in this Exigence, for want of a Robe?', Sheridan later wrote, 'he answered, somewhat shortly, play without a Robe: When, upon that, I laid open to him what a despicable Figure I should make, he turn'd upon his Heel, and said, D——n me if I care what you do, the Play shall not stand still for you; and immediately went and ordered the Prompter to draw up the Curtain'. Sheridan (in his own words) then 'rushed like a Madman precipitately on the Stage',<sup>3</sup> and dismissed the audience. Cibber knew—as did Sheridan—that refusing to play *Cato* was a gesture that could be interpreted as having political overtones. 'I well know the fatal Consequences of forming a Party', Sheridan later wrote, 'and too well foresaw the Use my Enemies would make of it, to my Disadvantage'.<sup>4</sup>

In order to understand the dangers of refusing to act *Cato* in Dublin in 1743, we must move into the inter-related worlds of print and performance. When *Cato* was first staged at Drury Lane in 1713, Addison was already a public figure, whose political ascent was closely linked to the printed word, beginning with his 1705 poem, *The Campaign*, and carrying on to his involvement with the *Tatler* (1709–11) and *The Spectator* (1711–12). His *Cato* was, by the same token, as much a political intervention as a work for the theatre, and was recognized as such by its contemporaries. 'What does the Constitution of *Rome* relate to us? Or how does his Opposition to CÆSAR affect our Government?', asks an anonymous pamphleteer in *Observations Upon Cato* (which was reprinted in Dublin in 1713): 'He [Cato] stands up for the Constitution of his Country, and the Course of its Laws; for Justice and Liberty, the old Roman Principles'.<sup>5</sup> A decade later, when *Cato* was again on the Smock Alley stage, Dubliners were being offered a series of new broadsheets, published under the pseudonym 'Cato', which stirred up fears of Jacobite conspiracies and foretold an Ireland in which 'the Houses of all the most noted Protestants [would be] either pull'd down or burnt' if the Williamite Settlement were to be reversed.<sup>6</sup>

Thomas Sheridan's refusal to play *Cato* on 14 July 1743 was thus understood in the context woven over thirty years from interlocking strands of performance and the printed word, and those threads would continue to be spun after Sheridan left the theatre that summer evening. If we imagine

<sup>3</sup> [Thomas Sheridan], *Mr. Sheridan's Address to the Town* (Dublin, 1743, ESTC T197897), 5–6.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>5</sup> [George Sewall], *Observations Upon Cato: A Tragedy. By Mr. Addison. In a Letter to \*\*\**, 3rd edn. (Dublin, n.d. [1723], ESTC T0227018).

<sup>6</sup> *Cato's Vision* (Dublin, 1723, ESTC N014840), 2. See also *Cato's Dream* (Dublin, 1723, ESTC T087149). The printer for both of these volumes, Thomas Hume, had premises in Smock Alley, only a few doors away from the theatre.

William Smith on the afternoon of 28 July making his way to the Aungier Street Theatre,<sup>7</sup> to see Sheridan play *Cato* in a special performance at the command of the Lords Justices he would have passed posted copies of 'Cibber's Warning Piece', a single-sheet broadside published in the intervening weeks. Equally, in the shops of fellow booksellers he would have seen copies of the *Dublin Journal*, which had published an exchange of letters involving Sheridan, Cibber, and their respective supporters, and in which notices for the 28 July performance warned that 'no persons to be admitted the upper Gallery [a notoriously riotous part of the auditorium] but such as have liveries and have received tickets from the Boxkeeper.'<sup>8</sup>

Depending upon the route he chose, Smith would have passed the bookshops of George Grierson at the Two Bibles in Essex Street, and Thomas Lawler at the sign of the Golden Key, Dame Street, both of whom had published earlier editions of *Cato*. Whichever route he chose, he probably would have made a point of stepping around the corner to Castle Lane, to George Risk's bookshop, 'where is to be Sold all Sorts of Plays', over which hung a portrait of Shakespeare. Risk and Smith had published a number of plays together, usually in partnership with George and Alexander Ewing, a father and son firm who sold books under the sign of the Angel and Bible, a short distance away in Castle Market. If they had been keen to have the latest gossip on Sheridan's refusal to play *Cato*, Smith and Risk may have made a detour to the shop of another of their brethren in the Guild of St Luke, Zachariah Martineau, who operated out of premises on Lower Blind Street with his business partner, Joshua Kinneir. Operating 'under the sign of the Green Man' and located only a few doors away from the Smock Alley Theatre (indeed, some of their imprints describe them as 'next to the playhouse'), Martineau had been retained to print Sheridan's full account of the controversy, *Mr. Sheridan's Address to the Town*, and would thus have been a potentially rich source of inside information in the hours before Sheridan's return to the stage as *Cato*.

If William Smith and George Risk did spend the evening in the theatre on 28 July 1743, they would have found themselves in a room packed with Sheridan's supporters, and would have seen an enthusiastic, even celebratory production of *Cato*, marking the effective end of disturbances in the theatre. However, in the world of print, the controversy would continue to simmer, with increasingly scurrilous (and increasingly anonymous) contributions appearing from both principals and their supporters, variously casting aspersions on one another's acting abilities, politics, personalities, and sexual

<sup>7</sup> In the summer of 1743, the same company alternated performances between the two main Dublin theatres of the time, the Smock Alley Theatre and the Aungier Street Theatre.

<sup>8</sup> John C. Greene and Gladys L. H. Clark, *The Dublin Stage, 1720-1745: A Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces* (Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 1993), 358.



prowess—all finally collected in two volumes: *Cibber And Sheridan: Or, The Dublin Miscellany. Containing All The Advertisements, Letters, Replys, Apologies, Verses &c., &c., &c., Lately Publish'd On Account Of The Theatric Squabble*; and *The Buskin And The Sock; Being Controversial Letters Between Mr. Thomas Sheridan, Tragedian And Mr. Theophilus Cibber, Comedian*.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, with the almost simultaneous reprinting of both volumes in London, the intensely local nature of the controversy was once again transformed by the medium of print into an event that extended beyond the tightly knit world in which it had erupted.

Of course we do not really know—nor are we ever likely to know—exactly what William Smith did on the afternoon of 28 July. He may have stayed at home and read a book. However, in attempting to reconstruct what he might have done had he chosen to attend the theatre, we get a sense of the complex circulation of social energy—to borrow Stephen Greenblatt's evocative phrase<sup>10</sup>—between print culture and the theatre. In its basic outlines, this model of the interaction between books and the theatre is far from unique to Georgian Dublin. What is distinctive about it, however, is what might be described as its intimate modernity. William Smith and his contemporaries were part of a complex, modern production and distribution process. At the same time, they worked in a very intimate, personal world, a cluster of streets bounded by Trinity College, Dublin Castle, St Patrick's Cathedral, and the Smock Alley Theatre. For instance, *Cato*, published in Dublin by William Smith, George Risk, and George Ewing, was to become one of the most famous roles of Thomas Sheridan, who was Jonathan Swift's godson; Ewing was later to fall out with the publisher George Faulkner over an edition of Swift (a friend of Addison), whereas Smith's son was later to publish a pirated edition of Sheridan's *Rhetorical Grammar*—and all of these men could have walked to each other's home or business in less than ten minutes; and they would have frequently passed one another on the street, seen each other in the coffee houses and taverns, or sat near one another in the pit of the Smock Alley Theatre.

If there is one characteristic that thus distinguishes the cultural life of Dublin in the eighteenth century (and in some respects it remains a feature of Irish cultural life), it is this combination of intimacy and modernity. One

<sup>9</sup> Theophilus Cibber and Thomas Sheridan, *Cibber And Sheridan: Or, The Dublin Miscellany. Containing All The Advertisements, Letters, ... Lately Publish'd, On Account Of The Theatric Squabble. To Which Are Added, Several Prologues And Epilogues, Spoke At The Theatre In Smock Alley, ... By Mr. Cibber, ... Also Two Songs By Mr. Worsdale, ...* (Dublin, 1743, ESTC To80958); Theophilus Cibber and Thomas Sheridan, *The Buskin And The Sock; Being Controversial Letters Between Mr. Thomas Sheridan, Tragedian, And Mr. Theophilus Cibber, Comedian; Just Published In Dublin* (London, 1743, ESTC T004356).

<sup>10</sup> Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 1–20.

of the distinguishing features of capitalist modernity is the increasingly mediated nature of communication, a drive towards what Immanuel Wallerstein calls 'the commodification of everything'.<sup>11</sup> With each stage of the production process—printer, bookseller, bookseller-as-distributor, bookbinder—an intermediary is interposed between the author and the reader, and the text's meaning moves further and further from the author's control. However, when all of these individuals live and work in close proximity to one another, the intimacy of face-to-face encounters acts as an opposing, centripetal, force, offsetting the alienating, centrifugal pull of modernity. The theatre, requiring the immediate physical presence of both audience and actor, was thus a cultural form that magnified the spatially compact culture of eighteenth-century Dublin, further counterbalancing the mediating force of print. At the same time, however, the theatre of the eighteenth century was closely bound to the printed word, thus making the play as printed book in some respects the defining artefact of this distinctive and paradoxically intimate modernity.

### Theatre and the Printed Word: 1550–1800

Stepping back, and taking a long view of the relationship between theatre and the printed word in Ireland, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that there is a causal link between theatre-going and the demand for published plays. Of course, this may sound obvious. However, there is an argument to be made (which we will consider at some length later) that some people read plays *instead of* seeing them in a theatre, in which case the printed text acts as a substitute for the performance. Nonetheless, if we were to chart the frequency with which plays were performed in Ireland in the years between 1550 and the early eighteenth century, and the frequency with which plays were published, the two lines would follow roughly the same shape: a long flat line, like the heart monitor of a dead patient, followed by a few random, encouraging blips, and then, after 1662, a slow (but by no means steady) upward curve, leaping sharply upward after 1700, until we arrive at the flourishing publishing and theatrical worlds of William Smith, George Risk, and their contemporaries in the mid-eighteenth century.

The first plays to have been performed in Ireland from published scripts were probably three short morality plays by the Bishop of Ossory, John Bale, staged at the Market Cross in Kilkenny on 20 August 1553: *Johan Baptystes Preachynge*, *The Temptacyon of Our Lorde*, and *God's Promises*. However, these plays were published in the Netherlands, probably in 1547. It was not until almost a century later that the first plays were printed in Ireland, after the

<sup>11</sup> Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism with Capitalist Civilization* (London: Verso, 1983), 16.

opening in 1635 of Ireland's first public theatre, the Werburgh Street Theatre in Dublin.<sup>12</sup> Built by the Lord Lieutenant of the time, Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, the Werburgh Street Theatre relied heavily on the patronage of Dublin Castle, but was nonetheless a public theatre, whose patrons included soldiers, the legal profession, minor gentry, and students from nearby Trinity College.

This first Irish theatre had a resident playwright, James Shirley, whose first play for the Werburgh Street Theatre, *The Royal Master*, premièred on 1 January 1638, and appeared in print later that year as *The Royall Master; As It Was Acted In The New Theater In Dublin: And Before The Right Honourable The Lord Deputie Of Ireland, In The Castle*, with an imprint indicating that it was to be 'sold at Castle Gate in Dublin' by the booksellers Edmund Crooke and Thomas Allot, associates of Shirley's London publisher, Andrew Crooke.<sup>13</sup> The Werburgh Street Theatre was also to produce the first published play by an Irish playwright, Henry Burnell's *Landgartha*, performed on 17 March 1640, and published in Dublin the following year.<sup>14</sup> A little over a year later, however, the theatre was closed, and its patron, Thomas Wentworth, executed. In the course of the next two decades, Irish theatre would almost cease, with the notable exception of a play published in Kilkenny in 1646: Henry Burkhead's *Tragedy of Cola's Furie, or, Lirenda's Miserie*,<sup>15</sup> a thinly veiled allegorical account of the warfare in Ireland.

When the theatre resumed in Ireland after the Restoration, with the opening of the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin in October of 1662, it went through a long period in which it struggled between the conflicting needs to maintain the patronage of Dublin Castle and the growing need to expand the theatre's audience base. On one hand, the theatre's management had to cater to the rigid (and not terribly entertaining) Francophile definitions of Court taste, beginning with the first new play performed in Smock Alley, *Pompey*, a translation of Corneille's *Le Mort de Pompée* by Katherine Philips (also, incidentally, the first professional production in English of a play by a woman), published in Dublin in 1663.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the theatre increasingly had to be filled between command performances by catering to a very

<sup>12</sup> Alan Fletcher, *Drama, Performance, and Polity in Pre-Cromwellian Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), 261–4. See also Christopher Morash, *A History of Irish Theatre 1601–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 4–6.

<sup>13</sup> James Shirley, *The Royall Master; As It Was Acted In The New Theater In Dublin: And Before The Right Honorable The Lord Deputie Of Ireland, In The Castle* (Dublin, 1638, ESTC S117254). See Allen Stevenson, 'Shirley's Publishers: The Partnership of Crooke and Cooke', *The Library*, 25, 4th Series (1944–5), 141–6.

<sup>14</sup> H.B. [Henry Burnell], *Landgartha: A Tragie-Comedie, as it was Presented in the New Theater in Dublin, with good applause, being an Ancient Story* (Dublin, 1641, ESTC R030260).

<sup>15</sup> Henry Burkhead, *A Tragedy of Cola's Furie, or Lirenda's Miserie* (Kilkenny, 1646, ESTC B5734).

<sup>16</sup> Katharine Philips, *Pompey. A Tragedy* (Dublin: John Cooke, 1663).

different public taste, which ran to plays such as *Bartholomew Fair*, *Wit Without Money*, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. In the gap between these two competing theatrical styles, there was a role—albeit a limited one—for the printed texts of plays.

The limited nature of theatre publishing in Ireland in the decades immediately after 1662 tells us something about the relationship between theatrical performance and print culture. If theatrical performance is, as it were, given away for free in the streets (as in the case of processional theatre or street theatre) or is confined to too small an audience (as in the case of a private theatre) the theatrical performance either saturates the market (in the former case) or produces a potential market too small to be viable (in the latter). In either situation, the link between print and performance will be weak or non-existent. However, when the theatre becomes predominantly public and commercial (even if sustained by some form of patronage), the performance has the potential to create a demand that cannot be fully satisfied through performance alone, thus creating a parallel market for theatrical texts. In short, the selling of theatre tickets and the selling of theatre books are parts of an industry that is, if not integrated, at least symbiotic.

It was not until after the first decade of the eighteenth century that the kind of public theatre that could support a trade in printed plays emerged in Ireland. Indeed, a pronounced increase in the amount of theatre-related print material was a phenomenon common across Europe in the eighteenth century, as Julie Stone Peters has argued.<sup>17</sup> In Ireland, however, there were special legislative conditions that created an added incentive for the publishing of plays. Like the Licensing Act of 1737 (10 Geo. II c. 28), which regulated the theatre, the major piece of English copyright legislation of the period (8 Anne c. 19; 1709) was never passed by the Irish Parliament, thereby creating a legislative loophole in which Irish managers could perform plays that had been forbidden by the Lord Chamberlain's Office in London, and Irish printers and booksellers could continue to 'take the liberty' (to use the language of the Act) of printing books without the author's consent. Although in practice many managers and printers exercised certain self-imposed restrictions, legally they operated in an environment much more wide open than that of their English counterparts.

It is difficult to measure precisely the growth of the Irish theatre publishing industry in the eighteenth century; however, a couple of indicators give us a sense of the dizzying rate at which the publishing of plays expanded over the course of the century. For instance, a catalogue appended to a 1725 edition of Suzanne Centlivre's *The Busy Body* lists thirteen plays printed for the bookseller William Smith. Two years later, a 1727 edition of George Farquhar's *Sir*

<sup>17</sup> Julie Stone Peters, *Theatre of the Book, 1480–1880* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 41–65.

*Harry Wildair* sold by William Smith and George Risk shows Risk and George Ewing collectively advertising nine plays for sale, Risk on his own offering fifty-four plays, and Smith offering twenty-three, all but two dating from after the Restoration.<sup>18</sup> If we move forward another forty-five years, a 1772 edition of Nicholas Rowe's *Tamerlane* published by the same three firms—Smith (taken over by William Smith's son since 1771), Risk, and Ewing—lists 108 titles, of which thirty (including fifteen of Smith's) were in the 1727 catalogue.<sup>19</sup> This indicates that not only did William Smith and his associates steadily increase the number of play titles that they sold; in the case of Smith in particular, they built their stock by adding newly fashionable plays to a core of steady sellers, including Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*, Aphra Behn's *The Rover*, Rowe's *Jane Shore*, and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

Taking a wider view, the *Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue* lists sixty Dublin-published plays in the years 1700 to 1725; this leaps to over 240 for the period 1726 to 1750 (bolstered by eleven Irish editions of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*); the number increases again in the next twenty-five-year period, 1751–75, to over 400 (including twenty-nine editions of Garrick's plays); and again to over 500 scripts in the twenty-four years 1776–99, of which fifty-six were by John O'Keeffe and forty-five by Richard Brinsley Sheridan (with George Colman and Richard Cumberland also well represented).<sup>20</sup> Not only does this indicate the rapid growth of play publishing in Ireland in the eighteenth century; it also suggests that Irish book-buyers had a remarkable choice of titles, given the size of the reading population. There is also a clear trend in the later decades of the century towards multiple editions from different printers and booksellers of recent stage hits, and this is part of a larger trend in the period, towards a theatre increasingly dependent on a limited number of hugely successful plays with long runs. At the same time, if we take the stock of Smith, Risk, and Ewing as typical in this period, and recall that almost a third of the plays listed in 1727 were still in their 1772 catalogue, it is reasonable to suppose that a bookseller in 1760, for instance, had not only new stock, but also books dating back several decades, and this in turn reflects the frequency with which plays were revived in a theatrical culture that continued to be organized around companies who

<sup>18</sup> George Farquhar, *Sir Harry Wildair: Being the Sequel of the Trip to the Jubilee. A Comedy as it is Acted at the Theatres* (Dublin, 1727, ESTC To260051).

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas Rowe, *Tamerlane. A tragedy*, 10th edn. (Dublin, 1772, ESTC T138753).

<sup>20</sup> For the purpose of this exercise, plays were identified from a list generated by searching for books with the word 'Theatre' in the title (manually culled to include only plays), since most plays at the time were published with the subtitle: 'As performed at . . .'. This means, of course, that these figures exclude those plays published without the word 'Theatre' in the title, as well as those not included on the *ESTC*. It is not, therefore, an accurate assessment of absolute numbers; it is, however, a useful indication of trends, and of conservative baseline figures to be corrected upwards.

kept a substantial number of older plays in repertoire. For instance, if we return to the example of Addison's *Cato*, we find that the play was printed in Ireland at least thirteen times between 1713 and 1772 (not including those contained in collected editions of Addison), while in the theatre, performances kept pace with publication until the latter third of the century.

Linked to this growth of theatre publishing was the geographical expansion of the Irish theatre in the first half of the eighteenth century. A new theatre opened in Cork in 1736, where the Smock Alley company had been playing in the summer since at least 1713, and there are records of performances in Galway from 1739, Limerick in 1736, Waterford in 1737, Newry and Derry in 1741, and Belfast in 1736 (and possibly as early as the 1720s). In almost all cases (with the exception of Belfast), these first performances were given by the Dublin-based companies from Smock Alley and the Aungier Street Theatre (which opened in 1734), driven by competition to find new audiences outside the capital in the unfashionable summer season.

The publishing of plays followed a similar geographic pattern. While the core of the Irish theatre publishing industry would remain in Dublin, there were nonetheless plays being printed in Belfast by the early 1740s; by the end of the century, the *ESTC* lists almost seventy plays with Belfast imprints.<sup>21</sup> In Cork, there is an early edition of Richard Steele's *The Conscious Lovers* from 1723, which would be followed by more than thirty other plays by the end of the century. Elsewhere, the spread of play publication (like the performance of plays) was more sporadic. In Newry and Waterford, play publication did not really commence until the 1770s, and it was the 1790s before there were plays being published in Limerick, despite a lively theatre culture in the city in the later decades of the century.

This is not to say, however, that plays were not available for sale in these towns and cities at earlier dates; given the structure of the Irish book trade as a whole in the period, there is every reason to believe that the expanding numbers of Dublin booksellers were selling their wares around the country. As J. R. R. Adams has shown, the structure of the book trade in eighteenth-century Ireland was complex. As a commodity with a relatively high value and low volume, books were easily transported, so that a book printed in Dublin might end up for sale in Belfast, just as a book printed in Belfast might end up for sale in Newry or Derry, or in the pack of an itinerant chapman, sold from door to door, market to market.

Adams has drawn particular attention to the popularity of two plays among readers in the smaller towns and in the Ulster countryside: John Michelborne's *Ireland Preserv'd: Or the Siege of Londonderry* and Robert

<sup>21</sup> Once again, this figure was produced by searching for the books with the word 'Theatre' in the title; it is therefore a low estimate.

Ashton's *The Battle of Aughrim: or, The Fall of Monsieur St. Ruth: A Tragedy*, both of which, Adams argues, 'deserve the title of folk play'.<sup>22</sup> Michelburne's play was first printed in Dublin for the printer and bookseller Samuel Dalton in 1738; however, by 1744, it was being produced by a leading Belfast printer and bookseller, James Magee. By 1774, there was an edition printed in Newry, and by 1787, one in Strabane. Ashton's *Battle of Aughrim* followed a similar pattern; first published in Dublin 1728, it was picked up by Magee in 1767, and was later published in Newry and Strabane in the 1780s. Although there is no record of *Ireland Preserv'd* or *The Battle of Aughrim* ever being performed professionally in either Dublin or Belfast, there is at least anecdotal evidence of amateur productions in barns and halls throughout rural Ulster well into the nineteenth century, where these plays became part of a largely submerged folk theatre culture—albeit a folk theatre at least partly sustained by print.

Although *Ireland Preserv'd* and *The Battle of Aughrim* are important for the glimpse they afford us of a lost popular theatre, they are anomalous in two respects: the scripts were sold to buyers who, in many cases, intended to perform them; and the plays had no connection with the world of professional theatre. By contrast, most plays printed in eighteenth-century Ireland were bought to be read, not performed, and most had received a professional production. To take a typical popular play of the period, David Garrick's *Miss in Her Teens* had its premiere at Covent Garden in January 1747, but did not appear on a Belfast stage until 7 September 1753 (with later productions in 1754, 1755, and again in 1758).<sup>23</sup> However, the Belfast firm of H. and R. Joy was quick off the mark with an edition of the play in 1747, shortly after its London opening, and by 1751 Magee was offering Belfast readers his fifth edition of the play, with a sixth edition appearing a decade later in 1761.<sup>24</sup> Like most plays published in the eighteenth century, the first Belfast imprint of *Miss in Her Teens* assures its readers that the version that they are reading is the same as that seen by London audiences, with the title page declaring: '*As it is Perform'd at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden*'. Moreover, like most published plays of the period, the volume includes a cast list, in this case for the initial London production.

It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that a Belfast man or woman buying a copy of *Miss in Her Teens* in 1747—six years before it reached the Belfast stage—was hoping to read the play as a substitute for seeing it on stage

<sup>22</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man: Popular Culture in Ulster* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1987), 27–9, 70.

<sup>23</sup> W. S. Clark, *The Irish Stage in the Country Towns: 1720–1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 298, 312.

<sup>24</sup> David Garrick, *Miss in Her Teens: Or, the Medley of Lovers. A Farce in Two Acts, as it is Perform'd at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden* (Belfast, 1747) (no ESTC number); also 5th edn. (Belfast, 1751, ESTC T172669); 6th edn. (Belfast, 1761) (ESTC T039511); and 7th edn. (ESTC N032723).

(unless, of course, they had seen it in London—or, indeed, in Dublin, where it had its Irish premiere on 9 March 1747). In either case, James Magee's customers would have had an interest in the cast lists, stage directions, and design details, as well as in the prologues and epilogues that were such an important part of the experience of theatre-going at the time. For our Belfast reader, living in a period increasingly dominated by a very modern obsession with the fashionable, the printed scripts of plays from the metropolitan capital provided a way of keeping up with the trends of the London stage, a mediated version of the authentic, face-to-face experience of being in the same theatre as David Garrick.

On other occasions, however, plays were published in Irish editions not to provide a substitute for an absent performance, but to allow theatre-goers to reflect on what they had seen in their native city. Outside of Dublin, this tended to be a phenomenon that developed later in the century, with books such as the Limerick edition of *The Death Of Captain Cook, A Grand Serious Pantomime, In Three Parts, As Now Exhibiting In London, Dublin And Paris With Universal Applause; With The Original French Music, New Scenery, Machinery, And Other Decorations, As Performed At The New Theatre Royal, Charlotte's-Quay* (c.1790).<sup>25</sup> For Dublin imprints, however, it was far more common (and common from far earlier in the century) for a play to have been seen in the capital before it was printed. Hence, the title pages of many Dublin-published plays contain the words: 'As performed in the Theatre-Royal, Smock Alley'. For instance, of the twenty-three plays listed for sale by William Smith in 1727, sixteen had been performed at Smock Alley in the previous six years.

In the century as a whole, the *ESTC* lists well over two hundred plays published in Ireland that claim on their title page to have been 'perform'd at the Theatre-Royal, Smock Alley', whereas there are more than one hundred plays published 'as performed at the Theatre-Royal, Crow Street', the theatre opened by actor-manager Spranger Barry in 1758. Such editions range from fashionable comedies by writers such as Colley Cibber, to the works of Shakespeare, Milton's *Comus*, operas, and farces, although occasionally plays by Irish writers premiered at Smock Alley, such as Thomas Sheridan's *The Brave Irishman*. Indeed, in the case of *The Brave Irishman*, Belfast editions of the play are published with the rubric 'As acted at the Theatre-Royal in Smock-Alley'.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *The Death Of Captain Cook, A Grand Serious Pantomime, In Three Parts, As Now Exhibiting In London, Dublin And Paris With Universal Applause; With The Original French Music, New Scenery, Machinery, And Other Decorations, As Performed At The New Theatre Royal, Charlotte's-Quay* (Limerick, [c.1790], *ESTC* No28743).

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Sheridan, *The Brave Irishman: Or, Captain O'Blunder: A Farce. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Smock-Alley With the Genuine Songs Not in Any Other Edition. Supposed to be written by T——s*



In some cases, the association with the theatre was fully justified. Thomas Sheridan's version of *Coriolanus*, for instance, included a four-page description of the procession included in the play: '2 Fifes; 2 Drums; 10 Soldiers with Shields and Spears; 6 Standard-Bearers; Spoils Taken from the Enemy', and so on.<sup>27</sup> In other cases, the reference to the local theatre was purely (and sometimes misleadingly) opportunistic. For instance, although John Vanburgh's *The Mistake* was frequently performed in Dublin, a 1726 Irish edition of the play, 'as it is Acted at the Theatre in Dublin', contains the London cast list and prologue.<sup>28</sup> Occasionally, a play would contain both London and Dublin cast lists, as was the case, for instance, with George Risk's reprint of George Sewell's *Sir Walter Raleigh* in 1719, 'As it was Acted at the Theatre in Lincolns-Inn-Fields And is to be Acted at the Theatre in Dublin'.<sup>29</sup>

As the market became increasingly driven by fashion in the later decades of the century, a play could pass from being merely popular to becoming a phenomenon, and this in turn could influence the way in which it was presented to the public in book form. This happened with R. B. Sheridan's *School for Scandal*, for instance, with at least twenty-three separate Irish editions appearing in a little over a decade. In such a crowded marketplace, some Irish printers and booksellers made an extra effort to establish the authenticity of their offering, most notably the Dublin bookseller William Jones, whose edition of Sheridan's play boasted that it was 'Regulated from the Prompt-Book', and included lines not spoken in performance, marked off by inverted commas.<sup>30</sup> Jones would later include this edition of *School for Scandal* in a ten-volume series, 'Jones's British Theatre', offered for sale 'to admirers of fine printing and engraving'. Like his 1791 edition of Shakespeare, which included 'a copious index to the remarkable passages and words', Jones's 'British Theatre' series marks an accelerating tendency in the late eighteenth century to treat works for the theatre as serious literature, worth reading and studying even for those lines not spoken on the stage.

*S*——n, Esq.; and Revised with Several Corrections and Additions by J——n P——s T——n. (Belfast, 1761, ESTC T166711). The publisher of these editions, James Magee, published later editions in 1773 (T196594) and 1791 (T138777).

<sup>27</sup> [Thomas Sheridan] *Coriolanus: Or, the Roman Matron. Taken from Shakespear and Thomson. As it is Acted at the Theatre-Royal in Smock-Alley. To Which is Added the Order of the Ovation* (Dublin, Dame-street, 1757, ESTC T167245), 62.

<sup>28</sup> John Vanburgh, *The Mistake. A Comedy as it is Acted in the Theatre in Dublin* (Dublin, 1726, ESTC N004502).

<sup>29</sup> George Sewell, *The Tragedy of Sir Walter Raleigh. As it was Acted at the Theatre in Lincolns-Inn-Fields And is to be Acted at the Theatre in Dublin* (London, 1719, ESTC T176363).

<sup>30</sup> Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The School for Scandal. A Comedy. Adapted for Theatrical Representation, as Performed at the Theatre-Royal, Drury-Lane. Regulated from the Prompt-Book. By Permission of the Managers* (Dublin, 1792, ESTC N021602).

In a small—but significant—number of instances, Irish publication provided a way of bringing to the public a play that had been suppressed for political reasons. Two of the most famous such cases involved Henry Brooke. His 1739 tragedy, *Gustavus Vasa, The Deliverer Of His Country*, was an early victim of the 1737 Licensing Act, and could not be performed in London because it was seen as an attack on Sir Robert Walpole. Taking advantage of the legislative loopholes in which the Irish theatre and publishing worlds operated, Thomas Sheridan staged it in Smock Alley (provocatively re-titled as *The Patriot*) on 3 December 1744, while Dublin printer and bookseller George Faulkner published the script, with the pointed subtitle *As it was to have been acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane*.<sup>31</sup> The play was to enjoy a renewed vogue later in the century, as Irish agitation for legislative independence heated up, with an edition claiming to be the third printed for R. Dodsley and John Mitchell in 1763, followed by a fourth edition in 1773. In the intervening years, Brooke had his satirical ballad opera, *Jack the Giant Queller* (which played one night at Smock Alley on 27 March 1749), suppressed by the Irish Lords Justices for its alleged libels on Dublin's Lord Mayor and Aldermen. Once again, George Faulkner stepped in, publishing *The Songs In Jack The Gyant [sic] Queller. An Antique History*<sup>32</sup> shortly after the first and only performance, with a second edition before the year's end, and a third edition in 1757.<sup>33</sup>

The interest of a play such as *Gustavus Vasa* or *Jack the Giant Queller* was less in the intrinsic merits of the script than in the circumstances of its performance (or non-performance, as the case may be). 'I went to the Play-house', recorded the London bookseller John Dunton, while on a visit to Dublin in 1699, 'which Place you know, Madam, is free for all Comers, and gives Entertainment as well to the Broom man, as the greatest Peer'.<sup>34</sup> Going to the theatre in the eighteenth century, it needs to be remembered, was an event, one of the few places in eighteenth-century Irish culture in which a reasonable cross section of society could take part in a public debate on issues such as loyalty, duty, patriotism, justice, money, morality, expediency, or virtue. The meaning of these debates was often regulated by the prologues and epilogues, addressed directly to the audience (or to portions of the audience), which would later form an important part of the printed play.

<sup>31</sup> Henry Brooke, *Gustavus Vasa, The Deliverer Of His Country. A tragedy. As it was to have been acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane* (Dublin, 1739, ESTC N003625).

<sup>32</sup> Henry Brooke, *The Songs In Jack The Gyant Queller. An Antique History* (Dublin, 1749, ESTC N023811).

<sup>33</sup> See Kevin J. Donovan, 'Jack the Giant Queller: Political Theater in Ascendancy Dublin', *Éire/Ireland*, 30 (2) (Summer, 1995), 70–88.

<sup>34</sup> John Dunton, *The Dublin Scuffle. Being a Challenge Sent by John Dunton to Patrick Campbell. With the Billet-doux sent him by a Citizen's Wife. With Some Account of his Conversation in Ireland* (London, 1699, ESTC R017079), 339–40.

Sometimes individual prologues of particular interest would be printed separately, as happened with Samuel Garth's prologue to Rowe's *Tamerlane*, spoken on 4 November 1712 and subsequently the source of a riot and a landmark court case.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, whenever the theatre erupted into riot—as happened in the aftermath of Sheridan's aborted *Cato* in 1743—the principals concerned would be sure to make their views known, and a flurry of pamphlets, open letters, satirical ballads, and toasts would issue promptly from printing presses all over the country. In the case of the rioting that erupted after Sheridan's production of Voltaire's *Mahomet* in 1754, for instance, the controversy was taken up by booksellers in London and Belfast, as well as in Dublin.<sup>36</sup>

Finally, the importance of the role of the theatre in Irish culture was itself subject matter for print. 'I have so often had occasion to compare the State of the Stage to the State of a Nation', wrote Thomas Sheridan in 1758, 'that I yet feel a Reluctancy to drop the Comparison, or speak of the one, without some Application to the other'.<sup>37</sup> Hence, the presses of the period produced a steady flow of apologies, appeals, addresses, and open letters, ranging from responses to the opening of new theatres, or new managerial policies, to reasoned arguments regarding the social function of the stage. Finally, at the apex of this stack of paper, we have the beginnings of Irish theatre history as a discipline, initially in volumes published by W. R. Chetwood and Benjamin Victor in London, but culminating in Robert Hitchcock's *Historical View of the Irish Stage*, published in Dublin in two volumes in 1788 and 1794,<sup>38</sup> the first appearing in the same year as Joseph Cooper Walker's 'Historical Essay on the Irish Stage', which was published in the second volume of the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*.<sup>39</sup>

## Conclusions: Reading Plays/Seeing Plays

Even if the Dublin bookseller William Smith did not go to the theatre on the afternoon and evening of Thursday, 28 July 1743, he must have been

<sup>35</sup> Samuel Garth, *The Prologue that was Spoken At the Queen's Theatre in Dublin, on Tuesday the 4th of November, 1712* (Dublin, 1712, ESTC T044591). For an account of the riot, see Helen M. Burke, *Riotous Performances: The Struggle for Hegemony in the Irish Theatre, 1712–1784* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 19–51.

<sup>36</sup> See Morash, *History of the Irish Theatre*, 58–66.

<sup>37</sup> Thomas Sheridan, *An Humble Appeal to the Publick, Together With Some Considerations on the Present Critical and Dangerous State of the Stage in Ireland* (Dublin, 1758, ESTC T004963), 323. Sheridan is quoting Colley Cibber.

<sup>38</sup> Robert Hitchcock, *An Historical View of the Irish Stage: From the Earliest Period Down to the Close of the Season 1788. Interspersed with Theatrical Anecdotes and an Occasional Review of the Irish Dramatic Authors and Actors*, 2 vols. (Dublin, 1788 and 1794, ESTC T068722).

<sup>39</sup> Joseph Cooper Walker, 'An Historical Essay on the Irish Stage', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, 2 (1788), 75–90.

reasonably certain that the controversy stirred up by Thomas Sheridan's refusal to play Cato would help to sell a few copies of Addison's play. If nothing else, the sheer quantity of plays published in Ireland in the eighteenth century (leaving aside for the moment other theatrical publishing, such as pamphlets or histories) suggests that reading plays was an important activity. One of the clearest indications that this was the case comes from a book that was designed to make it possible for people *not* to read plays (much less attend the theatre): *A Companion to the Theatre*, printed for Dublin bookseller Samuel Price in 1751. Providing plot summaries, as well as 'remarks Historical, Critical and Moral' for sixty-one plays (all but six of which were available in Irish editions), the *Companion* was aimed at readers who 'have neither Opportunity to see Plays, nor leisure to read them'. At the very least, the *Companion* offers to save its readers from social embarrassment, so that if a 'celebrated' play happens to be 'the Topic of Conversation, the Reader may be able to relish at least, if not join in the Argument.'

However, the *Companion* also had its uses even for serious playgoers. Watching plays in the theatre, its author suggests, was not necessarily the best way to understand a complex plot. 'A very little Time employed in the perusal of any particular Play', advises the *Companion*, 'gives the Reader that just and perfect Idea of it, which the seeing it, though ever so often, may fail to do.'<sup>40</sup> This is a valid point. Theatre-going in the eighteenth century was, at the best of times, a boisterous, rowdy activity. In a fully illuminated auditorium, audiences ate, drank, talked, flirted, and sometimes fought. For much of the century, young dandies sat on the stage, and a report in Faulkner's *Dublin Journal* in 1761 bemoans the 'antient practice' of 'Gentlemen standing on benches in the Pit with a view to displaying their charming persons to Advantage'.<sup>41</sup> These were hardly the circumstances in which to follow the subtle political overtones of a play like Addison's *Cato* or Rowe's *Tamerlane*, or to pick up the verbal wit of Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*.

At the same time, audiences of the time were clearly expected to *know* the plays that they saw, and it is rare for a play of the period to depend for its effect on a surprise plot twist. There is ample evidence to suggest that individual audience members frequently went to see the same play on more than one occasion, if only for the pleasure of comparing different actors in the same role (a frequent topic of eighteenth-century theatrical debate, and a stimulus for the new genre of actors' biographies). Patterns of publication suggest that although some plays were published in Ireland before they appeared on the Irish stage, most were published at roughly the same time that they were

<sup>40</sup> *A Companion to the Theatre: Or, A View of our Most Celebrated Dramatic Pieces: In which the Plan, Characters, and Incidents of each are Particularly Explained. Interspersed with Remarks Historical, Critical and Moral* (Dublin, 1751, ESTC T077490), pages not numbered.

<sup>41</sup> *Dublin Journal*, no. 3518, 20–4 Jan. 1761.

appearing in the theatres, so that reading and watching were different parts of the same process of knowing a play.

There was a world of difference between a noisy, brightly lit theatre auditorium, and a quiet candle-lit study or drawing room. In the contrast between these two sites for experiencing the same text, we can glimpse something of the relationship between the rapidly evolving private sphere and the complex, contradictory, and sometimes dangerous public sphere. If the theatre created an intimate community whose members (however temporarily and unequally) met face-to-face in a communal space that counterbalanced the alienating forms of modern society, the act of solitary reading (or reading in small family groups) created the kind of mediated, virtual community of private individuals that characterizes modernity. These two spheres intersected in the publishing of plays, where the public is made private through the medium of print, thus producing an emblematic cultural form of the intimate modernity of eighteenth-century Ireland.

## Science, 1550–1800

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The political and social changes in mid-seventeenth-century Ireland resulted in changes in scientific outlook that, in turn, influenced the course of scientific thought, research, and publication. Science publication in seventeenth-century Ireland inevitably reflects the political, religious, and economic divisions that prevailed before and became more pronounced after 1641, so that it is necessary to bear in mind the different strands of Irish society and the diverse purposes that motivated them when analysing scientific publication in Ireland. A significant number of Irish scholars who had been educated on the Continent remained there to practise medicine, or to lecture in mathematics or in the field of natural philosophy. Furthermore, many Irish doctors were attached to the leading Irish families and had accompanied their patrons to the Continent in the wake of 1641: their publications bear the imprints of Paris, Prague, Rome, and Cologne. As the country recovered from the wars of the 1640s, the New English settlers began to explore and survey the land with a view to maximizing the benefits to themselves, and ultimately to the state, from the improvements in areas such as agricultural methods and drainage. These surveys were carried out along scientific lines, their promoters being men who were much influenced by the current thinking in scientific circles in England. Unlike their earlier counterparts who tended to work individually, many New and Old English scientists by the 1650s had opportunities to form groups and to work together, to research and publish their findings in a coordinated fashion. Finally, one must not forget that there were also Irishmen of Old English extraction who were based in England and whose research and publications emanated from the London presses.

The printing process in the seventeenth century comprised a complex tapestry of agents and agencies, from the author, through the printer's establishment, the bookseller, subscribers, and patrons, while encountering a plethora of other factors that could, and often did, influence the actual appearance and content of the final output, the distribution of the publication,

and perhaps most importantly, the status of the text in the scholarly world. Particularly in the scientific field, inaccurate printing or unauthorized editing at the printer's premises could have very serious implications for the reputation of the author and the standing of his experiments or theories. Piracy posed another grave threat to the scientific community, indicating that there were several major issues of trust relating to scientific publication, most of which were beyond the author's control. Other factors, notably the high cost of scientific printing, much of which required detailed diagrams and plates, had implications for the publishing of scientific works. Often too, the printer or bookseller could expect a low return on his investment as the market for scientific works was limited and slower to yield a profit than other types of printing that had greater public appeal.

The advent of learned society publishing, particularly the Royal Society model, provided a greater measure of publishing reliability, of textual authority, and of author protection, although even the Royal Society was not immune to charges of partiality and its system of operation was not perfect. Learned society publishing in Ireland did not become established until the eighteenth century. Prior to that, the members of the Dublin Philosophical Society published in the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society, a process that would continue for successive centuries because of the stature of the *Philosophical Transactions* and also because of their wide dissemination amongst the international scholarly community.<sup>1</sup>

Scientific research and publishing mushroomed in Ireland in the second half of the seventeenth century, although it was not without precedent. Relatively little scientific publishing had taken place in Ireland in the first half of the seventeenth century. The main reasons for this were that there was little support for such endeavour in the form of capital to subvent either experimentation or publication, and the market was relatively small. More importantly, the potential authors of scientific works were mainly based on the Continent. Juan José Pérez-Camacho has noted 'the mathematical character'<sup>2</sup> of Christopher Holywood's *De meteoris*... published at Paris in 1613.<sup>3</sup> Holywood, alias John Geraldine, a Jesuit, was possibly the first Irishman to produce a printed scientific text. Holywood cited not only the ancient observers but also recent and contemporary authorities, and his work included observations of the tides at Dublin and Wexford, anticipating the

<sup>1</sup> For an exhaustive discussion of the role of printing in the dissemination of scientific works, see Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Printing and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Juan José Pérez-Camacho, 'Late Renaissance Humanism and the Dublin Scientific Tradition (1592–1641)', in Norman McMillan (ed.), *Prometheus's Fire: A History of Scientific and Technological Education in Ireland* ([Carlow]: Tyndall Publications, [2000]), 57.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Holywood [John Geraldine], *Ioannis Geraldini Hiberni De meteoris tractatus*... (Paris, 1613).

work of the Boate brothers in the 1650s by almost half a century. Holywood had taught in France and Italy before returning to Ireland in 1604 to take charge of the Irish Jesuit mission. James Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, was also an important astronomer who had a special interest in ellipses and was a supporter of Kepler's planetary laws. Pérez-Camacho points out that Ussher produced the first Irish account of the Keplerian system.<sup>4</sup> John Punch, an Irish Franciscan deeply versed in the ancient tradition of astronomy but conversant with the modern commentators, published *Philosophiae ad Mentem Scoti Cursus Integer* . . . in 1642.<sup>5</sup>

Medical texts were also being produced by Irish doctors. In the early seventeenth century the most notable publications were Theobald Anguilbert's *Mensa Philosophica*,<sup>6</sup> believed to have been the first printed medical work by an Irishman,<sup>7</sup> whereas Dr Thaddeus Dun published *Epistolae Medicinales* at Locarno in 1591<sup>8</sup> and *De Morbis Mulieribus* in 1619.<sup>9</sup> Also in 1619, Dermot O'Meara (variously Dermitius Meara) published *Pathologia Hereditaria Generalis*,<sup>10</sup> which, according to Doran,<sup>11</sup> was the first medical book printed in Ireland. It was later reprinted in London and Amsterdam. Neil O'Glacan, who held the chairs of physic at Toulouse and Bologna and was for a time physician to the King of France, published *Tractatus de Peste* at Toulouse in 1629.<sup>12</sup>

By 1650, publishing patterns were already in place, some of which were to continue into the eighteenth century. In particular, we see the tendency for the Old Irish to publish abroad and to concentrate on the field of medicine. However, we can also remark that the new order that prevailed post-1641 ushered in a new way of thinking that in turn led to scientific publishing that broke with the old traditions. The Cromwellian settlers included men of intelligence who were well-versed in the thinking of Sir Francis Bacon. Bacon had broken away from the old idea of syllogistic or deductive reasoning, the Aristotelian legacy. His 'new learning' involved assembling facts by

<sup>4</sup> James Ussher, *Ad Solarem Hypothesin Concinnandam Requiruntur* (1627), cited in Pérez-Camacho, 'Late Renaissance Humanism', 67–70.

<sup>5</sup> John Punch, *Philosophiae ad Mentem Scoti Cursus Integer primum quidem editus in Collegio Romano Fratrum Minorum Hibernorum* . . . (Rome, 1642–3), 3v. A later edition was published at Paris in 1652.

<sup>6</sup> Theobald Anguilbert, *Mensa Philosophica* (Cologne, c.1480).

<sup>7</sup> John F. Fleetwood, *The History of Medicine in Ireland*, 2nd edn. (Dublin: Skellig Press, 1983), 48.

<sup>8</sup> Thaddeus Dun, *Epistolae Medicinales* (Locarno, 1591).

<sup>9</sup> Thaddeus Dun, *De Morbis Mulieribus* (1619).

<sup>10</sup> Dermot O'Meara [Dermitius Meara], *Pathologia Haereditaria Generalis* . . . (Dublin, 1619, ESTC S100843).

<sup>11</sup> Beatrice Doran, 'Reflections on Irish Medical Writing (1600–1900)', in Davis Coakley and Mary O'Doherty (eds.), *Borderlands: Essays on Literature and Medicine in Honour of J. B. Lyons* (Dublin: Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, 2002), 82.

<sup>12</sup> Neil O'Glacan, *Tractatus de Peste seu Brevis, Facilis, & Experta Methodus Curandi Pestem* (Toulouse, typis Raym. Colomerii, Regis and Academiae Tolosanae Typographi, 1629).



observation and experience, considering their similarities and their dissimilarities, and then theorizing on the basis of the evidence thus presented. This radical shift from deductive to predictive reasoning would permit the advancement of scientific thought and open up new avenues of discovery. Bacon also made scientific thought and ideas more accessible by publishing in the vernacular. Foster points out that ‘before the rational empiricism of Francis Bacon was applied in the later seventeenth century, there was no scientific vision or language available when the new in nature was contemplated or encountered’.<sup>13</sup> The use of English was a key factor in the transmission of the ‘new learning’. The importance of English had already been stressed by Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who had made elaborate proposals for a practical academy for London where the professors should teach ‘matters of action meet for present practice both of peace and warre’.<sup>14</sup> Gilbert’s academy would be in opposition to the universities, which were perceived to be hidebound by their adherence to classical learning. In fact, Gresham College, founded at London in 1598 through the bequest of Sir Thomas Gresham, a wealthy merchant and financial agent to Elizabeth I, was in many respects a development of Gilbert’s ideals that had not been realized in his own lifetime. Lectures at the College were provided in Latin and English and more ‘modern’ technological subjects were included on the curriculum, namely mechanics, anatomy, chemistry, navigation, and geometry *inter alia*. In turn, Gresham College was the ‘matrix in which the Royal Society originated and in which it was formed and moulded’.<sup>15</sup> Some Irish intellectuals, such as James Ussher, had important links with the College.

One of the disciples of the Baconian philosophy was Samuel Hartlib, born near Danzig (now Gdansk), of English and Polish-German parentage. Hartlib had studied at Cambridge in the 1620s and remained on in England as a merchant. He was influenced also by the ideas of John Amos Comenius, the Czech philosopher who had spent some time in London in 1641 and who believed that language was ‘the gateway to knowledge, and his aim was to simplify and shorten by a kind of royal road to learning, all studies, arts and sciences’.<sup>16</sup> Hartlib was a consummate networker in an era when correspondence and, increasingly, publication were the means of propagating ideas. Although not himself a scientist, he was instrumental in publishing the works of others (he also wrote *The Compleat Husband-man*<sup>17</sup> and other works

<sup>13</sup> John Wilson Foster, ‘Encountering Traditions’, in idem (ed.), *Nature in Ireland: A Scientific and Cultural History* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1997), 27.

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Dorothy Stimson, *Scientists and Amateurs: A History of the Royal Society* (London: Sigma Books, 1949), 9.

<sup>15</sup> D. McKie, ‘The Origins and Foundation of the Royal Society’, in H. Hartley (ed.), *The Royal Society: its Origins and Founders* (London: The Royal Society, 1960), 8.

<sup>16</sup> Cited in Stimson, *Scientists and Amateurs*, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Samuel Hartlib, *The Compleat Husband-man* (London, 1659, ESTC R207715).

of a practical nature) and he was a member of the 'invisible college', a group of men who met regularly to discuss topics of scientific interest.

Hartlib had an extensive correspondence with Sir William Petty and other Cromwellian army personnel who served in Ireland during the 1650s. He was responsible, for example, for the publication in 1652 of Gerard Boate's *Ireland's Naturall History*.<sup>18</sup> This little book was published posthumously for Boate had died in 1649 shortly after his arrival in Ireland to take up a post as physician to the army. The work was based on information collected by his brother Arnold Boate, Physician in General to the army in Leinster, who spent eight years in Ireland altogether. Boate describes the Irish landscape in detail, including the coastline, and his work is recognized as the first regional history in the English language. Arnold Boate, in the preface to his brother's book, explains that it was envisaged as the first part of a multivolume work that would encompass the flora and fauna, as well as 'the natives of Ireland, their old-Fashions, Laws and Customes'.<sup>19</sup> He also states that Gerard had 'both begun and finished this First Book of his Naturall History of Ireland, some years before he went thither, or had any thoughts of doing so'.<sup>20</sup> The book was intended as a vade mecum for settlers in a boggy, rainsoaked territory. Hartlib dedicated the work to Oliver Cromwell, Captain General of the Commonwealth Army in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and to the Right Honourable Charles Fleetwood, Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Ireland. His dedicatory preface highlights the utilitarian purpose of the work that was meant to promote the productive colonization of the country as well as to serve the greater glory of God:

for whether we reflect upon the first settlement of a Plantation, to prosper it. Or upon the wealth of a nation that is planted to increase it, this is the Head spring of al the native Commerce & Trading which may bee set afoot therein by any way whatsoever. Now to advance Husbandry either in the production and perfection of earthly benefits, or in the management thereof by way of Trading, I know nothing more usefull, than to have the knowledge of the Natural History of each Nation advanced and perfected: . . . so except Husbandry be improved, the industry of Trading, whereof a Nation is capable, can neither be advanced or profitably upheld.<sup>21</sup>

He continues:

I lookt also somewhat upon the hopefull appearance of Replanting Ireland shortly, not only the Adventurers, but happily by the calling in of exiled *Bohemians* and other Protestants also, and happily the invitation of some well affected out of the *Low*

<sup>18</sup> Gerard Boate, *Ireland's Naturall History* . . . , Published by Samuel Hartlib, Esq. for the Common Good of Ireland, and more Especially for the Benefit of the Adventurers and Planters therein (London, 1652, ESTC R14821).

<sup>19</sup> Arnold Boate, 'Preface' to Gerard Boate, *Ireland's Naturall History*, p. xii.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xiii.

<sup>21</sup> Samuel Hartlib, 'Dedicatory' [addressed to Oliver Cromwell and the Rt. Hon. Charles Fleetwood], in Boate, *Ireland's Naturall History*, [pp. v–vi].

*Countries*, which to advance are thoughts suitable to your noble genius, and to further the settlement thereof, the Naturall Historie of that Countrie will not bee unfit, but very subservient. Thus beseeching the Lord to prosper all your undertakings.<sup>22</sup>

Boate's work 'was amongst the first to exclude accounts of local marvels, colourful digressions, supernatural occurrences and citations from classical authors in regional survey',<sup>23</sup> which made it a model Baconian text.

In 1651, William Petty came to Ireland. He had practical experience of navigation, had trained in chemistry and medicine in the Low Countries, had studied under Thomas Hobbes at Paris, and in 1650 was appointed to the chair of anatomy at Oxford. Petty understood the principles of observing, experimenting, and pushing the boundaries of knowledge. He undertook to survey the whole of Ireland in thirteen months: his survey, which became known as the Down Survey, was undertaken in order to apportion lands forfeited by the Irish to the Cromwellian adventurers. Petty's plan was not only to work out each adventurer's entitlement in terms of land but to lay down the results in map form. He employed a staff of about 1,000 to carry out the survey that complemented Hartlib's aims as articulated in *Ireland's Naturall History*. Some of Petty's own publications that emanated from the work of the survey include *A Geographickall Description of ye Kingdom of Ireland Collected from ye Actual Survey*<sup>24</sup> and *Hibernia Delineatio*,<sup>25</sup> a collection of county maps based on the survey. As a friend of Hartlib, Boyle, and others, and a founder of the Royal Society in 1660, Petty's influence on Irish philosophers and men of science was significant. In 1683 he became the first president of the Dublin Philosophical Society. This Society, which has been exhaustively documented by Hoppen,<sup>26</sup> met from 1683 to 1708, but it was disrupted by the events leading up to the 1690 rebellion and the uncertain conditions that prevailed in the country thereafter. The founding of the Society marks a break with the hitherto more individual nature of discovery and certainly of publication in Ireland. Hoppen remarks, 'One of the characteristic features of the development of natural philosophy in this period was the formation of scientific societies. The work and attitudes of the members of such societies are the outward and tangible expression of the influence and intermixture of those many intellectual traditions which provided the dynamic behind the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century.'<sup>27</sup> The

<sup>22</sup> Samuel Hartlib, 'Dedicatory' [addressed to Oliver Cromwell and the Rt. Hon. Charles Fleetwood], in Boate, *Ireland's Naturall History*, [pp. ix–x].

<sup>23</sup> S. Mendyk, 'Gerard Boate and *Ireland's Naturall History*', *JRSAI*, 115 (1985), 5.

<sup>24</sup> William Petty, *A Geographickall Description of ye Kingdom of Ireland Collected from ye Actual Survey*... (London, [1689], ESTC R21018).

<sup>25</sup> William Petty, *Hibernia Delineatio* (1685).

<sup>26</sup> K. Theodore Hoppen, *The Common Scientist in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of the Dublin Philosophical Society 1683–1708* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970).

<sup>27</sup> K. Theodore Hoppen, 'The Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society 1683–1708: Introductory Material and Index', *Analecta Hibernica*, 30 (1982), 151–248, plus 20 microfiches.

Society drew its membership from the Fellows of the University of Dublin, such as Miles Symner, who had been appointed Professor of Mathematics at the college in 1652, Archbishop William King, and Dr St George Ashe, provost of the college, as well as the longer settled Anglo-Irish population, the foremost member of these being William Molyneux. Molyneux is probably best remembered today as the author of the pro-union political work *The Case of Ireland's Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated*,<sup>28</sup> but in the scientific domain he was equally well known in his own day for *Dioptrica Nova: a Treatise of Dioptricks*,<sup>29</sup> which dealt with the problems of seeing and perception and influenced Locke's second edition of *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding*.<sup>30</sup> Hoppen has shown that almost 50 per cent of the membership was born in Ireland and that after clergymen, gentlemen, and politicians, the physicians formed the third largest group in the Society.<sup>31</sup> The Society met on a weekly basis and papers were read on scientific, medical, mathematical, astronomical, and antiquarian topics: discussions ranged over the broadest possible base. Petty's influence and Molyneux's personal connections with the Royal Society and the Oxford Philosophical Society (also founded in 1683) ensured that the Society was not operating in isolation from mainstream English and European scientific thought. In fact, nineteen members of the Dublin Society were also members of the Royal Society. For our purposes the Society poses a problem in that many of the papers read before it were not published and remained in manuscript format.<sup>32</sup> Very often the papers of the Society are in the form of letters, such as Thomas Molyneux's letter to the Right Revd. St George Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, 'concerning swarms of insects that of late years have much infested some parts of the province of Connaught in Ireland', dated London, 5 October 1697.<sup>33</sup>

However, the Royal Society connection provided a conduit for the publication of papers by King, Molyneux, Allan Mullen, and others. The *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* was probably the most important scientific publication and means of communication in existence in the seventeenth century. Atkinson has suggested, 'In much of Europe, the

<sup>28</sup> William Molyneux, *The Case of Ireland's Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated* (Dublin, 1698, ESTC R30063).

<sup>29</sup> William Molyneux, *Dioptrica Nova: a Treatise of Dioptricks* (London, 1692, ESTC R3440).

<sup>30</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding*, 2nd edn. (London, 1694, ESTC R21459).

<sup>31</sup> Hoppen, 'The Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society', 169.

<sup>32</sup> The papers of the Society that survived in various repositories were eventually published on microfiche in Hoppen 'The Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society'.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Molyneux, 'A Letter to the Right Rev. St. George [Ashe], Lord Bishop of Clogher, Concerning Swarms of Insects that of Late Years Have Much Infested Some Parts of the Province of Connaught in Ireland . . .' [item no. 158], in Hoppen, 'The Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society', microfiche no. 6, 505–23.

Royal Society was originally known only as the source of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* which reached a wide international audience in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries'.<sup>34</sup> The emphasis of the Irish scientists was on matters of a practical nature. Archbishop King in 1685 published 'Of the bogs and loughs in Ireland'<sup>35</sup> in the *Philosophical Transactions*; Allan Mullen, one of the first medical graduates of the University of Dublin, published on the comparative anatomy of the eye and on the volume of blood in the body; and Thomas Molyneux, William's brother, published a paper on coughs and colds in the *Philosophical Transactions* of 1694. Mullen was also responsible for the first anatomical work to be published in Ireland, *An Anatomical Account of the Elephant*.<sup>36</sup>

The *Philosophical Transactions* provided a vehicle of publication for those Irishmen based in continental Europe. Bernard Connor (also O'Connor), born in County Kerry, educated at the major medical centre of Montpellier, and sometime physician to King John Sobieski of Poland, published an early description of a skeleton with bones fused at the joints in the *Philosophical Transactions*. Connor published *Dissertationes Medico-Physicae*<sup>37</sup> and *Evangelium Medici*, making him one of the earliest writers to forge a connection between chemistry, physiology, and pathology.<sup>38</sup> John O'Dwyer discussed the interference of midwives and quacks in the medical profession in *Querela Medica se Plactus Medicinae Modernaе Status*;<sup>39</sup> James Wolveridge, a Dublin University graduate practising at Cork, published what is considered to be the oldest book on midwifery in the English language—*Speculum Matricis Hybernicum; or, the Irish Midwives' Handmaid*—in 1670, which was frequently reprinted.<sup>40</sup> Sir John Temple published on the gout and Dr John Stearne, President of the College of Physicians in 1667 and of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians, published *Thanatologia seu, de Morte Dissertatio in qua Mortis Natura, Causae, Mobilitas Remorae et Remedia Proponuntur* in 1659.<sup>41</sup> Petty also published on the theme of mortality, *Observations on the Dublin-Bills of Mortality*,<sup>42</sup> and Dr Charles Willoughby published a paper in 1690, *Observations on the Bills of Mortality*.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Dwight Atkinson, *Scientific Discourse in Socio-Historical Context: The Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London, 1675–1975* (New Jersey and London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1999), 17.

<sup>35</sup> William King, 'Of the Bogs and Loughs in Ireland', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (1685).

<sup>36</sup> Allen Mullen, *An Anatomical Account of the Elephant* (London, 1682, ESTC R32097).

<sup>37</sup> Bernard Connor [O'Connor], *Dissertationes Medico-physicae* . . . (Oxford, 1695, ESTC R18918).

<sup>38</sup> Bernard Connor [O'Connor], *Evangelium Medici* (London, [1697], ESTC R29325).

<sup>39</sup> John O'Dwyer, *Querela Medica se Plactus Medicinae Modernaе Status* (1667).

<sup>40</sup> James Wolveridge, *Speculum Matricis Hybernicum; or, The Irish Midwives' Handmaid* (London, 1670, ESTC R15116).

<sup>41</sup> John Stearne, *Thanatologia seu, de Morte Dissertatio* . . . (Dublin and London, [1659], ESTC R210180).

<sup>42</sup> William Petty, *Observations on the Dublin-Bills of Mortality, 1681 and the State of the City* . . . (London, 1683, ESTC R22115).

<sup>43</sup> Charles Willoughby, *Observations on the Bills of Mortality* (1690).

The eighteenth century witnessed an explosion of publishing in all scientific sectors. The emphasis on utilitarianism continued. The first complete description of the flora of Ireland was Caleb Threlkeld's *Synopsis Stirpium Hibernicarum*,<sup>44</sup> which drew on previous manuscript and printed sources. Threlkeld produced a systematic list in Irish, English, and Latin of the names of plants. He also described plants growing in the vicinity of Dublin. The work also contained Thomas Molyneux's observations on plants. This type of treatment was developed by John K'eogh, a Church of Ireland minister in County Roscommon, who published *Botanologia Universalis Hibernica*<sup>45</sup> and *Zoologia Medicinalis Hibernica*, providing the Irish, English, and Latin names of plants and animals.<sup>46</sup> He promoted the medical efficacy of using animals for cures, and in the dedication to *Zoologia* he advocated the promotion of the three branches of the *materia medica*: botany, zoology, and mineralogy. Another important later work in the field of natural history was John Rutty's *Essay Towards a Natural History of the County of Dublin*,<sup>47</sup> which was the first natural history of an Irish county.<sup>48</sup> The work is also notable for its pioneering use of population statistics. Rutty was a member of the short-lived Physico-Historical Society of Ireland (1744–52) that continued in the tradition of Hartlib and his circle, aiming to improve the government in Ireland and encourage immigration. Like Molyneux in the 1680s, the Society set about collecting information on local matters through the agency of county committees. These were not successful, but the Society appointed Charles Smith, a physician, to carry out surveys of Cork and Waterford. Already in 1744 they had published Walter Harris's *The Antient and Present State of the County of Down*, edited by Smith.<sup>49</sup> The Cork volume contains a map of the county in which Smith marked out limestone vales. Davies points out that this was 'the first attempt to depict cartographically the solid geology of any part of Ireland'.<sup>50</sup> The very comprehensive Cork and Waterford volumes appeared in 1746 and 1750, respectively.

Rutty also published an *Essay towards a Natural, Experimental and Medicinal History of the Mineral Waters*.<sup>51</sup> He was a member of another,

<sup>44</sup> Caleb Threlkeld, *Synopsis Stirpium Hibernicarum* (Dublin, 1726, ESTC T210828).

<sup>45</sup> John K'eogh, *Botanologia Universalis Hibernica, or A General Irish Herbal* (Cork, 1735, ESTC T145176).

<sup>46</sup> John K'eogh, *Zoologia Medicinalis Hibernica* (Dublin, 1739, ESTC T100832).

<sup>47</sup> John Rutty, *An Essay towards a Natural History of the County of Dublin* (Dublin, 1772, ESTC T77170).

<sup>48</sup> David Cabot, *The New Naturalist: Ireland* (London: Harper Collins, 1999), 31.

<sup>49</sup> [Walter Harris], [Charles Smith (ed.)], *The Antient and Present State of the County of Down* (Dublin, 1744, ESTC T144670). The work is generally attributed to Smith, who revised most of Harris's original work. He issued a much shorter version of it in 1740, entitled *A Topographical and Chorographical Survey of the County of Down* (Dublin, 1740) with a London reprint in the same year.

<sup>50</sup> Gordon L. Herries Davies, 'The Making of Irish Geography, IV: The Physico-Historical Society of Ireland, 1744–1752', *Irish Geography*, 12 (1979), 92–8, 96.

<sup>51</sup> John Rutty, *Essay towards a Natural, Experimental and Medicinal History of the Mineral Waters of Ireland* (Dublin, 1757, ESTC T77598).

short-lived society, the Medico-Philosophical Society (1756–78) that devoted itself to the ‘pursuit of truth and the sound method of reasoning first introduced by Lord Bacon’. Sir Edward Barry, a Cork physician, published various treatises on diseases of the lungs and the digestive system, and like Rutty also analysed mineral waters in his *Observations Historical, Critical and Medical on the Wines of the Ancients*.<sup>52</sup> Another important Irish physician, the surgeon Sylvester O’Halloran, published extensively on diseases in the second half of the eighteenth century, including an important treatise on eye ailments.<sup>53</sup>

The most influential eighteenth-century society in the context of publishing in Ireland was undoubtedly the Dublin Society, later to become the Royal Dublin Society. Founded in 1731, like its precursor the Dublin Philosophical Society, the Dublin Society’s aims were rooted in applied science, husbandry, agricultural methods, and other practical matters, and these aims were reflected in the Society’s full title—the Dublin Society for improving Husbandry, Manufactures, and other Useful Arts. Sciences were later appended to the title. Thomas Molyneux and Thomas Prior were two of the founder members of the Society that involved itself in practical projects such as draining bogs and reclaiming them for tillage. Like the Dublin Philosophical Society, the Dublin Society encouraged interested individuals to send in reports of discoveries, many of which survive in the Society’s archives. The Dublin Society began an active publishing programme that was to last up to the middle of the twentieth century. Advertisements were taken out in local papers in order to promote new activities, and to inform the public about recent discoveries and other developments in the fields of agriculture and husbandry. They paid a printer to publish pamphlets, and in 1736 the Dublin printer Richard Reilly negotiated with the Society to publish their *Weekly Observations* in his *Dublin Newsletter*, with the Society agreeing to purchase 500 copies of each issue. In 1739, Reilly published a collected edition of selected *Weekly Observations*, which was pirated in several other capitals and reprinted in 1763.<sup>54</sup> The collected *Observations* are indicative of the general utilitarian focus of the Society’s publications and include titles such as ‘General reflections on the present state of Ireland in relation to our trade and manufactures’ and ‘A method of raising hops in red bogs’, and several articles on flax. The Society went on to publish *Proceedings* from 1764

<sup>52</sup> Edward Barry, *Observations Historical, Critical and Medical on the Wines of the Ancients*... (London, 1775, ESTCT86996).

<sup>53</sup> Sylvester O’Halloran, *A New Treatise on the Glaucoma or Cataract* (Dublin, 1750, ESTCT134028). O’Halloran also published on gangrene and many other diseases and disorders.

<sup>54</sup> Barbara Traxler Brown, ‘Three Centuries in Ireland: The Library of the Royal Dublin Society, Grafton Street’, in Barbara Hayley and Edna McKay (eds.), *Three Hundred Years of Irish Periodicals* (Dublin: Association of Irish Learned Journals, 1987), 14.

and *Transactions* from 1800. These included extracts in English of articles that had originally appeared in continental and American publications.

The Royal Dublin Society was the parent institution of several bodies that still flourish: notably the National Botanic Gardens, the National Library of Ireland, and the National Museum of Ireland (to which the Royal Irish Academy also contributed major collections). Phyllis Clinch notes that 'botany as a science was only beginning to take form in Ireland when the Dublin Society was founded in 1731. . . . Not only is Irish botany coeval with the Society but [it] was sponsored by it to a significant extent'.<sup>55</sup> Clinch also observes that Arthur Dobbs, an amateur naturalist, was the first to discover the role of bees in pollination, publishing a paper on the subject in 1750.<sup>56</sup> In 1794 the committee of agriculture recommended the publication of Samuel Hayes's *A Practical Treatise on Planting and Management of Woods and Coppices*,<sup>57</sup> and in the same year, Walter Wade, Professor of Botany at the Botanic Gardens, published *Catalogus Systematicus Plantarum Indigenarum in Comitatu Dublinensi Inventarum*.<sup>58</sup>

Some isolated works worth noting from the latter half of the eighteenth century are Oliver Goldsmith's *An History of the Earth and Animated Nature*<sup>59</sup> in 1774, the first Irish edition being published in 1776–7 in eight volumes. Foster notes that this was one of the first 'truly popular books of natural history'.<sup>60</sup> Robert Gibson's 1752 work on surveying was also significant in that it was the first English text on surveying to be published in North America, running to twenty-one editions.<sup>61</sup> In 1785, the Royal Irish Academy was founded by James Caulfeild, first Earl of Charlemont, and a group of like-minded antiquarians and scientists. The purpose of the Academy was to investigate and promote the sciences, polite literature, and antiquities in Ireland. The membership of the Academy overlapped with that of the Royal Dublin Society in the early years but the Academy had a more restricted membership. The Academy laid more emphasis on the importance of research rather than on applied science. It also established a publishing programme from its early days. *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy* were

<sup>55</sup> Phyllis E. M. Clinch, 'Botany and the Botanic Gardens', in James Meenan and Desmond Clarke (eds.), *The Royal Dublin Society 1731–1981* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1981), 186.

<sup>56</sup> Arthur Dobbs, 'A Letter . . . Concerning Bees, and their Method of Gathering Wax and Honey . . .', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (1750), 536–49; reprinted in *Journal of Life Sciences*, 1 (1979–80), 129–34.

<sup>57</sup> Samuel Hayes, *A Practical Treatise on Planting and the Management of Woods and Coppices* (Dublin, 1794, ESTC N22062).

<sup>58</sup> Walter Wade, *Catalogus Systematicus Plantarum Indigenarum in Comitatu Dublinensi Inventarum* (Dublin, 1794, ESTC T96542).

<sup>59</sup> Oliver Goldsmith, *An History of the Earth and Animated Nature* (London, 1774, ESTC T146096).

<sup>60</sup> Foster, 'Encountering Traditions', 42.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Gibson, *A Treatise of Practical Surveying* (Dublin, 1752, ESTC T176489), cited in Foster (ed.), *Nature in Ireland*, 59.



published from 1787 until 1907, 50 per cent of the papers being scientific or medical. Apart from astronomical and meteorological observations that featured in the early *Transactions*, Richard Kirwan, FRS and honorary member of several European academies, published ‘Observations on Coal-Mines’ (1788),<sup>62</sup> in which he provided detailed accounts of coal deposits in England and Ireland. He later published on the component gases of coal deposits in Ireland. In 1790, he turned his attention to the analysis of the substances used for bleaching linen in a paper, ‘Experiments on the alkaline substances used in bleaching, and on the colouring matter of linen-yarn’.<sup>63</sup> Of Kirwan’s many publications, one of the most enduring was *Elements of Mineralogy*,<sup>64</sup> the first systematic treatise on the subject in English that was translated into French and German and became the standard European text on mineralogy for half a century.

Up to the end of the eighteenth century, the Irish scientific mind was turned towards the resolution of practical problems and to dealing with matters that had a utilitarian purpose. Above all, men of science had learned to enquire and to experiment, rather than basing their deductions on observation and what was already known and accepted. The pattern of publishing in Ireland resembles that of England, but the output was relatively small because of the fact that many Irish authors looked to England, and particularly the Royal Society as a vehicle for authoritative scientific publication. Furthermore, a number of Irish authors were not solely based in Ireland and their works regularly bear continental imprints. Nevertheless these factors do not diminish the value of Irish scientific output that was a coherent enterprise, focused and purposeful, and in the fields of surveying and natural history, often ground-breaking.

<sup>62</sup> Richard Kirwan, ‘Observations on Coal-Mines’, *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, 2 (1788), 157–70.

<sup>63</sup> Richard Kirwan, ‘Experiments on the Alkaline Substances used in Bleaching . . .’, *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, 3 (1790), 3–47.

<sup>64</sup> Richard Kirwan, *Elements of Mineralogy* (London, 1784, ESTCT91085).

# Foreign Language Books, 1550–1700

*Mary Ann Lyons*

During the second half of the sixteenth century, a mere handful of foreign language books by Irish authors or relating to Ireland were published or reprinted at home and abroad, the majority being Latin hagiographies of early and medieval Irish saints and martyrs.<sup>1</sup> Only the Irish theologian, Thomas Hibernicus, made a significant impact on the continental publishing world through his *Flores Omnium Pene Doctorum*, which was reprinted at least twenty-six times in France, Italy, Flanders, and the German states between 1550 and 1596.<sup>2</sup> However, from the 1620s, as the Counter-Reformation movement thrived in Europe and the Irish Catholic clerical presence on the Continent grew steadily, the output and range of overwhelmingly theological and historical books penned by Irish scholars abroad increased very considerably. This study is therefore largely focused on the corpus of literature in Latin and continental languages published by these clerics. The period also witnessed a very gradual increase in the publication of foreign language works by a coterie of non-Catholic scholars, doctors, lawyers, and humanists in Ireland and abroad and this development is afforded brief attention. Foreign language books by authors resident in Ireland and the works of continental writers that dealt substantially with Ireland are also surveyed. Finally, the gradual growth in the importation of foreign language books into Ireland, the evolution of mechanisms for their distribution, and their place in seventeenth-century Irish libraries are discussed.

## The Blossoming of Continental Early Modern Irish Scholarship

The formation of a scholarly Irish historiography and hagiography, pioneered by two Gaelic theologians, Richard Creagh, Catholic Archbishop

<sup>1</sup> See Tony Sweeney, *Ireland and the Printed Word* (Dublin: Eamon de Búrca, 1997), no. 841; nos. 2598 and 2599; no. 2976; no. 4536; no. 4659; no. 5720.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 5071.

of Armagh, and Cornelius O'Devany, Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor in the 1580s, blossomed on the Continent from the mid-1610s down to the 1680s.<sup>3</sup> Animated by what they perceived as unjust treatment of their Catholic kinsmen at home, Old English and Gaelic writers abroad highlighted Ireland's proud Christian heritage in the hope of boosting morale and fostering a spirit of unity among all Catholics of Ireland. Their Latin works were published to counter the negative image of Ireland and the Irish conveyed to European literate audiences by a proliferation of deeply partisan English commentaries. Two Old English scholars were particularly influential in developing Irish historiography in the Elizabethan era. The Dublin-born chronicler, Richard Stanihurst, in his *De Rebus in Hibernia Gestis* (1584) and *De vita Sancti Patricii* (1587), reminded contemporaries of Ireland's glorious civic and Christian history.<sup>4</sup> At a high point during the Nine Years' War in Ireland (1594–1603), Peter Lombard, an Old English Catholic theologian, composed his *Commentarius*. This novel argument in favour of a change in sovereignty within a radically new political context in Ireland that rested on unity of religion rather than ethnicity testifies to the sophistication of political analysis within elements of the Catholic elite in Ireland at the turn of the sixteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

By the 1620s, small coteries of Catholic clerics from Ireland were established in continental centres of learning where they imbibed the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, engaged in current theological and philosophical controversies, and embraced innovations in their fields of expertise. As print technology advanced and Irish colleges and religious communities flourished across Europe, a growing number of predominantly Latin books published by Irish scholars were disseminated throughout the Continent and at home. In their discourses, these authors endeavoured to articulate their reactions, and those of their compatriots, to changing politico-religious conditions in Ireland. This new generation of Irish clerical writers, especially the Franciscans at St Anthony's College, Louvain, were eager to publish a history of Christianity in Ireland. The historical works of Protestant writers such as James Ussher (d.1656), Primate of the Established Church, served as both incentive and model for their pioneering project.<sup>6</sup> Following the conventions of late Renaissance scholarship, these Catholic writers endeavoured through their studies in hagiography, history, and martyrology to explain and

<sup>3</sup> Benignus Millett, 'Irish Literature in Latin, 1550–1700', in T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin, and F. J. Byrne (eds.), *A New History of Ireland, III. Early Modern Ireland, 1534–1691* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), 565–7.

<sup>4</sup> See Colm Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst, the Dubliner 1547–1618* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1981).

<sup>5</sup> Peter Lombard, *De Regno Hiberniae, Sanctorum Insulā, Commentarius* (Louvain, 1632); Thomas O'Connor, 'A Justification for Foreign Intervention in Early Modern Ireland: Peter Lombard's *Commentarius* (1600)', in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds.), *Irish Migrants in Europe after Kinsale, 1602–1820* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 14–31.

<sup>6</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 567–9.

maintain the unfailing attachment of the Irish to Catholicism, to highlight Ireland's standing as a distinct *Natio*<sup>7</sup> among European states, and to construct an Irish Catholic identity that transcended traditional ethnic divisions.

They also had a more pressing motive for publishing such works. In the early 1600s, Scottish polemical writers, notably Thomas Dempster, claimed the celebrated Franciscan scholar John Duns Scotus (c.1265–1308) as a Scotsman and appropriated much of Ireland's ancient and Christian heritage, including early Irish saints. Incensed Irish Jesuits, Franciscans, and secular clerics based at Liège, Paris, Rouen, and Antwerp launched their counter-attack during the late 1610s and early 1620s, publishing Latin refutations of Dempster and more significantly, several pioneering lives of the Irish saints.<sup>8</sup>

Of these, Thomas Messingham's formidable scholarly Latin compendium of Irish saints' lives (Paris, 1624) proved particularly influential, becoming a cornerstone in modern Irish hagiography.<sup>9</sup> Messingham, an Old English priest and Rector of the Irish College at Paris in the 1620s, was among the first of the Irish Counter-Reformation clergy to realize the political and pastoral utility of a modern Irish hagiography in attempting to resolve cultural and political identity problems experienced by Catholics in early seventeenth-century Ireland.<sup>10</sup>

Inevitably the highly contentious issues at the heart of these problems—tensions arising from dual loyalty to the monarchy and to Rome, the exclusion of Catholics from state and legal posts, and the threat to their security of land tenure—loomed large in the Latin historiographical and hagiographical works published on the Continent by Catholic Old English and Gaelic scholars.<sup>11</sup> David Rothe's *Analecta Sacra Nova et Mira de Rebus Catholicorum in Hibernia, pro Fide et Religione Gestis* (Paris, 1616–19) represents the finest articulation of these concerns. Rothe, a native of Kilkenny, one-time Rector of the Irish College at Douai and Bishop of Ossory (1618–50), analysed the contemporary political scene in Ireland in the hope of heightening his compatriots' consciousness of the Catholic *Natio*—a union of all Irish Catholics at home and on the Continent. He proposed a modern version of political loyalty, presenting Irish Catholics with a rationale to redefine their traditional contractual loyalty to the Crown and make common cause with

<sup>7</sup> See Thomas O'Connor, 'Towards the Invention of the Irish Catholic *Natio*: Thomas Messingham's *Florilegium* (1624)', *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 64 (1999), 157–77.

<sup>8</sup> Henry Fitzsimon, *Catalogus* (Liège, 1619); David Rothe, *Brigida Thaumaturga* (Paris, 1620); David Rothe, *Hibernia Resurgens* (Rouen, 1621); G.F., *Hiberniae Sive Antiquioris Scotiae Vindiciae Adversus... Thomae Demsteri* (Antwerp, 1621).

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Messingham, *Florilegium Insulae Sanctorum seu Vitae et Acta Sanctorum Hiberniae...* (Paris, 1624).

<sup>10</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 569–70; O'Connor, 'Messingham's *Florilegium*', 157–77.

<sup>11</sup> Rothe, *Brigida thaumaturga*; idem, *Hiberniae resurgens*.

the Gaelic Irish.<sup>12</sup> Together, the Latin works of Stanihurst, Lombard, Messingham, and Rothe represented a new, distinctly Catholic scholarly historiography of Ireland whose agenda was the amelioration of the condition of Catholics in Ireland.<sup>13</sup> Historical scholarship and hagiography, however, were not the exclusive preserve of either Irish clerics or indeed Catholics in the early seventeenth century. Philip O'Sullivan Beare, a native of Cork and captain in the Spanish army, who was materially supported in his writing endeavours by Irish émigrés in Spain, published his *Historicae Catholicae Iberniae Compendium*, a seminal commentary on Irish history down to the end of the Elizabethan era, at Lisbon in 1621.<sup>14</sup> In Ireland, throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, two Protestant writers, James Ussher and Sir James Ware (d. 1666), made a very significant complementary contribution to this flourishing Irish scholarship; between them, they published eight scholarly Latin books relating to antiquities, Irish ecclesiastical history, and hagiography. Ussher in particular was determined not to allow his peripheral location to impede his participation in the current discourse of Irish Catholic scholars in Europe; he frequently liaised with Catholic scholars on the Continent in the course of his research and imported books recently published abroad.<sup>15</sup>

From the early 1600s, the Franciscans at Louvain played a pivotal role in maintaining the momentum for Irish historical and hagiographic scholarship. Hugh Ward and Patrick Fleming, both superiors of St Anthony's College, instigated the Order's remarkable research project in Irish ecclesiastical history. In the 1640s, their plans began to bear fruit when their confrère, John Colgan, published two ground-breaking hagiographic works, the *Acta Sanctorum* and the *Triadis Thaumaturgae*, but the enterprise ultimately floundered in the early 1670s.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Franciscan scholars associated with St Isidore's College, Rome, especially its founder, Luke Wadding, and his two nephews, Francis Harold and Bonaventure Baron, dominated among those Irish writers who contributed to Catholic Church history in general. During the period 1623–57, Wadding's Latin publications included the life

<sup>12</sup> Colm Lennon, 'Political Thought of Irish Counter-Reformation Churchmen: The Testimony of the "Analecta" of Bishop David Rothe', in Hiram Morgan (ed.), *Political Ideology in Ireland 1541–1641* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), 181–202; Thomas O'Connor, 'Custom, Authority, and Tolerance in Irish Political Thought: David Rothe's *Analecta Sacra et Mira* (1616)', *Irish Theological Quarterly*, 65 (2000), 133–56.

<sup>13</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 569–70; O'Connor, 'Messingham's *Florilegium*', 157–77.

<sup>14</sup> *Selection from The Zoilomastix of Philip O'Sullivan Beare*, ed. Thomas J. O'Donnell (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1960), p. xiii; Millett, 'Irish Literature', 567; Clare Carroll, 'Irish and Spanish Cultural and Political Relations in the Work of O'Sullivan Beare', in Morgan (ed.), *Political Ideology in Ireland*, 229–53.

<sup>15</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 364; no. 3362; no. 5318; no. 5331; nos. 5532 and 5533; nos. 5535 and 5538.

<sup>16</sup> John Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum* (Louvain, 1645) and *Triadis Thaumaturgae* (Louvain, 1647); also Hugh Ward, *Sancti Rumoldi* (Louvain, 1662), and Patrick Fleming, *Collectanea Sacra* (Louvain, 1667); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 570.

and works of St Francis and his Order, a biography of Thomas of Aquitaine, and lives of several Italian saints.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, independent of the Franciscans, during the 1650s and 1660s several accomplished Irish Catholic writers published Latin historical works. Dominic de Rosario O'Daly, a Dominican who spent most of his life on the Continent, published a laudatory history of the Munster Geraldines, which was subsequently translated into French.<sup>18</sup> John Lynch, a priest from Galway, who withdrew to France after the Cromwellian victory, penned several important historical works there in the 1660s, notably his rebuttal of Giraldus Cambrensis and his *Alithinologia*.<sup>19</sup> Latin biographies of contemporary Irish bishops were also printed at Antwerp, Saint-Malo, and Amsterdam.<sup>20</sup> The 1680s saw a further spurt of historical and biographical publications, the most important being *Ogygia* by Roderic O'Flaherty, son of the last O'Flaherty chief. This work, which recounts the history of Ireland down to the 1680s and draws extensively on Gaelic manuscript sources, was critically acclaimed within continental literate circles.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Contribution of Continental Writers*

During the seventeenth century, a handful of continental scholars, notably Italians, made a modest though significant contribution to the nascent modern hagiography and history of Ireland.<sup>22</sup> From the 1630s, several lives of Saints Patrick, Brigid, Malachy, and Fiachra were published in the vernacular at Florence, Venice, Bologna, Naples, and Lucca by both clerical and lay Italian scholars. Among these was the acclaimed hagiographer, Abbot Giacomo Certani, who drew heavily on John Colgan's *Triadis Thaumaturgae* while composing his lives of Brigid and Patrick.<sup>23</sup> The *Vida y Purgatorio de S. Patricio* of the Spanish scholar Juan Pérez de Montaban merits particular attention by virtue of its exceptional popularity with continental audiences.

<sup>17</sup> Luke Wadding, *B.P. Francisci Assisiatis* (Antwerp, 1623); idem, *S. Antonii de Padua* (Rome, 1624); idem, *Annales Minorum* (Lyon, 1625–48); idem, *Vita... B. Petri Thomae Aquitani* (Lyon, 1637); idem, *Vita S. Anselmi Episcopi Lucensis* (Rome, 1657); Francis Harold, *Epitome Annalium Ordinis Minorum* (Rome, 1662); idem, *B. Alberti Assarthiano* (Rome, published posthumously in 1688); Bonaventure Baron, *Trias Tusca* (Cologne, 1676) and *Annales Ordinis SSmae. Trinitatis...* (Rome, 1684); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 574–5.

<sup>18</sup> Dominic de Rosario O'Daly, *Initium, Incrementa, et Exitus Familiae Geraldinorum* (Lisbon, 1655) and *Commencement, Progrès et la fin de la Famille des Geraldins* (Dunkirk, 1697).

<sup>19</sup> John Lynch, *Cambrensis Eversus seu Potius Historica Fides in Rebus Hibernicis, Geraldo Cambrensis Abrogata* (St Omer?, 1662) and *Alithinologia* (Saint-Malo, 1664).

<sup>20</sup> William Saint-Leger, *De Vita et Morte Illustrissimi Thomae Valesi, Archiepiscopi Cassiliensis in Hibernia* (Antwerp, 1655); John Lynch, *Pii Antistitis Icon, Sive de Vita et Morte Rmi. Francisci Kirovani* (Saint-Malo, 1669); Gilbert Burnet, *La Vie de Guillaume Bedell, évêque de Kilmore en Irlande* (Amsterdam, 1687), a version of the original English text was published in London in 1685.

<sup>21</sup> Roderic O'Flaherty, *Ogygia...* (London, 1685, ESTC R3105, R181186).

<sup>22</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 3116 and 3117.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., nos. 953 and 954; no. 1132; no. 1870; no. 1901; no. 2095.

First published at Madrid in 1627, it was reprinted at Naples, Lisbon, and Seville, and two separate French translations were printed on several occasions at Brussels and in France down to the early 1680s.<sup>24</sup> In general, however, apart from a life of Saint Brigid in French and two Dutch lives of Saints Patrick and Dymphna, published in the mid-seventeenth century,<sup>25</sup> scholarly histories of Irish Catholicism by continental writers are very rare.<sup>26</sup>

## Publicizing the Condition of Catholics in Ireland

Alongside this growing corpus of scholarly historiography and hagiography, many Irish clerics published martyrologies and commentaries detailing the execution of Irish Catholics, mainly since the 1580s. Certain books, such as the account of Francis Taylor's martyrdom (d.1621), were in Latin, but the fact that several others, including a *Breve Relacion de la Presente Persecucion de la Irlanda* (1619), published by a group of priests at the Irish college, Seville, and Enriquez's life of a Catholic refugee, Mary Stuart O'Donnell (1627), were published in Spanish demonstrates their authors' intent to remind their compatriots and their host communities abroad about the plight of Catholics at home in Ireland.<sup>27</sup> Particularly significant episodes in the ongoing political and religious disturbances in Ireland captured the interest of a handful of French, Dutch, and Italian commentators, especially from the Elizabethan period onwards. The second Desmond rebellion (1579–83) and the fate of the Spanish Armada (1588) were among the first events in Irish politics to have an impact upon continental political consciousness as evidenced by the publication of several French- and Dutch-language commentaries, which reported developments in Ireland and England as they unfolded.<sup>28</sup> Similarly, the Nine Years' War occasioned the publication of several Italian- and Dutch-language newsletters in Rome and Brussels.<sup>29</sup> The swell of English-language publications relating to the political upheavals of

<sup>24</sup> *La Vie Admirable du Grand S Patrice Patriarche d'Hibernie* (Brussels, 1637) and *Histoire de la Vie et du Purgatoire de S Patrice* (Avignon, 1642; Rouen, 1673 and 1682; Paris, 1643 and 1676; Lyon, 1674).

<sup>25</sup> Noel de Meraude, *La Vie Admirable de S. Brigide Vierge Taumatargue* (Tournai, 1652); *Het Wonderlyck Leven van den Grooten H. Patricius, Patriarch van Irlandt* (Antwerp, 1668) and Joannes Ludolphus van Craywinckel, *De Triumpherende Suyverheyt . . .* (Mechelen, 1658).

<sup>26</sup> An exception is Louis Augustin Alemand's *Histoire Monastique d'Irlande . . .* (Paris, 1690), subsequently translated, enlarged, and published in 1722 as *Monasticon Hibernicum*.

<sup>27</sup> A. Enriquez, *Resolucion Varonil Voiage que hizo Doña Maria Estuarda, Condesa de Tirconel* (Brussels, 1627), subsequently published in French, *Resolution Courageuse et Lavable de la Comtesse de Tirconel* (Paris, 1630); John Mullan, *Idea Togatae Constantiae, sive Francisci Taillieri Dubliniensis* (Paris, 1629); James Stafford, *Breve Relazione delle Vicendi di Religione, e Domino delli stati della Gran Brettagna et Ibernica* (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>28</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 704 and 705; no. 1632; no. 2762; nos. 2763–6; no. 5390.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 360–3.

the 1640s, the 1650s, and the Williamite wars (1689–91) is mirrored in the increased number of books, published in the vernacular, by continental writers in the Low Countries, Iberia, France, and Italy.

The disturbances of the early 1640s spawned at least four original Dutch-language books, three Dutch translations of English-language descriptions, and a Portuguese commentary.<sup>30</sup> Readers in Ireland and on the Continent were also kept abreast of the Confederation of Kilkenny's deliberations, several of which were published in Latin and French at Kilkenny, Louvain, and possibly Lille.<sup>31</sup> Personal reflections on these events were available in two books, one French and the other Italian, published by James Butler, Duke of Ormond, and Giovanni Battista Rinuccini, both of whom were key figures in the 1640s negotiations.<sup>32</sup> Undoubtedly the most controversial Latin work relating to the 1640s disturbances was Connor O'Mahony S.J.'s *Disputatio* (Lisbon, 1645). O'Mahony's incitement of Irish Catholics to exterminate the English, and his allegation that 150,000 heretics had been killed in Ireland between 1641 and 1645 caused grave offence and the book was widely denounced and burned.<sup>33</sup> After the Confederate wars had ended, quarrelling between the two sides continued on the Continent.<sup>34</sup> In the late 1650s and 1660s, Irish scholars relentlessly publicized the harsh treatment afforded Catholics by the Cromwellian administration and the ongoing subordination of Catholics in Ireland in their Latin, Spanish, and French works.<sup>35</sup>

The Williamite wars reactivated the publication of foreign language commentaries on political and religious affairs in Ireland.<sup>36</sup> Details of particularly significant speeches and reports of pivotal military engagements, notably the siege of Derry (1689), were immediately transmitted in Dutch- and French-language publications.<sup>37</sup> More commonly, however, continental readers had to rely upon Dutch, French, and German translations of English accounts

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., nos. 1243 and 1244; no. 2887; no. 3357; no. 4454; no. 4542; no. 5380; no. 5453; no. 5750. Among the works translated were the horrifically graphic work by James Cranford and Thomas Partington, *The Teares of Ireland* (London, 1642, ESTC R32373); Edward Loftus's *The Particular Relation of the Present Estate and Condition of Ireland*... (London, 1642, ESTC R9885); and Matthew Rowe, *An Exact and Full Relation of the Great Victory Obtained Against the Rebels at Dungons-Hill in Ireland*... (London, 1647, ESTC R201833).

<sup>31</sup> *Catholicorum Hyberniae Confaederatorum*... (Louvain, 1642 [1643]) and *Manifest et Articles que les Catholiques Confederez d'Hibernie Demandent en Toute Humilité au Serenissime Charles* (Lille, 1642? [1643]).

<sup>32</sup> James Butler, *Harangue de Monseigneur Le Marquis d'O...* *Viceroy d'Irlande* (Brussels and Paris, 1649); G. B. Rinuccini, *Relacam dos Successos so Reyno de Irlanda* (Lisbon, 1646); idem, *Relazione della Battaglia Seguita fra Catholici Hibernesi et Heretici Puritani in Ultonia, Provincia d'Hibernia*... (Rome and Florence, 1646).

<sup>33</sup> Connor O'Mahony, *Disputatio Apologetica et Manifestativa de Jure Regni Hiberniae Adversus Haereticos* (Lisbon, 1645); Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 3273.

<sup>34</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 2668–71; Millett, 'Irish Literature', 570.

<sup>35</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 693; no. 2024; nos. 2027 and 2029; no. 3113.

<sup>36</sup> For example, *De l'état Présent d'Irlande et des Avantages qu'y Peuvent Trouver les Protestants François* (Dublin, 1681).

<sup>37</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 2556; no. 3416; no. 4911.



such as George Walker's legendary if controversial *A True Account of the Siege of Londonderry* (London, 1689).<sup>38</sup> At the height of the wars, two especially important Dutch-language books on the campaign were published. The first was a translation of the former governor of Derry, George Philips's *An Apology for the Protestants of Ireland* (London, 1689), while the second, D. v. H's *Eengeland's Staatsveraanderingen* (Haarlem, 1690), was acclaimed as 'the most extensive account of the siege of Derry ever given in continental literature'.<sup>39</sup> By 1690, propagandists from both sides were targeting their continental readerships, the Jacobites largely publishing in Latin, the Williamites in Dutch. The Duke of Schomberg's campaign and the Battle of the Boyne (1690) featured particularly prominently in French and Dutch commentaries on the Irish wars, published at Amsterdam and The Hague.<sup>40</sup>

## Theological Publications: An Overview

The bulk of foreign language scholarly works published by Irish writers on the Continent during the period 1550–1700 was Latin theology since the overwhelming majority of Irish authors were clerics. In this sphere, too, the Franciscans dominated throughout the seventeenth century. From the early 1600s, a succession of professors and lecturers in theology and/or philosophy at the University of Louvain and, specifically, St Anthony's College had virtually all of their Latin theological works published by the Louvain press.<sup>41</sup> Their books addressed a range of theological issues, chiefly the sacraments, the Trinity, the Eucharist, justification and merit, Christian ethics and morality, the Gospels and specifically Sacred Scripture, the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, apologetics, and missiology. After Louvain, it was the presses at Rome and to a lesser extent Prague, the other major centres of Irish Franciscan learning, that produced many theological works by Irish scholars.<sup>42</sup> Among these, Luke Wadding was especially prodigious, publishing, especially during the 1650s, several Latin books on the Blessed Virgin Mary's Immaculate Conception, baptism, death, and redemption.<sup>43</sup> Franciscan theologians

<sup>38</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 5469–71.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 2192; no. 3455.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 1168; nos. 1585–6; no. 2223; nos. 2712–13; no. 4455; no. 5547.

<sup>41</sup> Most eminent among these were Raymond Caron, John Colgan, Patrick Brenan, Thomas Sheeran, Bernard Fallon, John Sinnich, Francis O'Kennedy, Bonaventure Keown, Patrick Duffy, Anthony MacCarthy, Bernadin Forstall, Anthony Daly, Francis O'Donoghue, Bernadine Gavan, and Michael O'Riordan. See Sweeney, *Ireland*; Millett, 'Irish Literature', *passim*.

<sup>42</sup> Thaddeus Bermingham published Latin works at Rome during the 1640s and 1650s whereas Anthony Broudin published several texts at Prague in the 1660s and 1670s. See Sweeney, *Ireland*.

<sup>43</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 5427, 5429, and 5433; the Franciscan Fathers (eds.), *Father Luke Wadding Commemorative Volume* (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds Ltd., 1957).

based beyond the Louvain–Rome–Prague triangle had their books published locally.<sup>44</sup>

The Society of Jesus also produced several distinguished Irish theologians, many of whom held prestigious chairs in the universities of Spain, France, the Low Countries, Bohemia, Italy, and the German states. Two of Ireland's foremost Jesuit scholars of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Richard Stanihurst and his nephew, William, independently published Latin texts on Christology, the Eucharist, psalms, litanies and orations, eschatology, and mariology.<sup>45</sup> Down to the late 1670s, a succession of Irish Jesuits published a steady stream of scholarly works in Latin on subjects including the sacraments, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the morality of contracts, Saints Ignatius and Norbert, the Immaculate Conception, and panegyrics.<sup>46</sup> Of these, the most commercially successful was the *Theologia Tripartita Universa* (1678) by Richard Archdekin, professor of philosophy and theology at Louvain and Antwerp. Overseas missionaries also published scholarly Latin texts; by far the most popular was Michael Wadding's *Practica de la Theologia Mistica* (Puebla de Los Angeles, 1681), which subsequently appeared in Spanish in both Mexico and Spain.<sup>47</sup>

Whilst Franciscans and Jesuits dominated Irish theological studies, individual scholars from the Dominican and Augustinian Orders also published important works, all in Latin. Of the three renowned Irish Dominican theologians of the seventeenth century,<sup>48</sup> John Baptist Hackett (d. 1676) was most prolific, publishing six major theological works at Rome in the 1650s and 1660s. The Galway-born Augustinian scholar, Augustin Gibbon Burke, professor of theology at Erfurt, also made a significant impact in continental theological circles with his *Theologiae Scholasticae in Divum Thomam*, which became a recognized textbook for advocates of Thomism.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Patrick O'Connor, *Quodlibetica Decisio Monastici Cujusdam Casus...* (Paris, 1635); Bonaventure O'Connor, *Quintuplex Pantekaedechryris Mariana Omnibus Immaculatae Concept* (Trent, 1658); idem, *Elenchus Encomiorum Celeberr. & Testimonium Clariss. Utriusque Ecclesiae Triumpphan...* Jo. Duns Scoti (Bolzano, 1660); idem, *Lumen Orthodoxum* (Bolzano, 1661); see Canice Mooney, *Irish Franciscans and France* (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds Ltd., 1964); Micheál MacCraith and David Worthington, 'Aspects of the Literary Activity of the Irish Franciscans in Prague, 1620–1786', in O'Connor and Lyons (eds.), *Irish Migrants in Europe*, 118–34.

<sup>45</sup> Lennon, *Richard Stanihurst*; Millett, 'Irish Literature', 575; Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 4804–20.

<sup>46</sup> Among these, the most eminent were Peter Wadding, Stephen White, Paul Sherlock, Ignatius Tellin, and John Robert Wallis. See Sweeney, *Ireland*.

<sup>47</sup> See Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 5441. Although Jesuit scholars mainly published Latin works, occasional books were made available in the vernacular. Two of William Stanihurst's books were published in German and Dutch. A panegyric in Spanish was published by an Irish Jesuit at Seville in 1640 to mark the centenary of the Order. William Bathe, *Apparatus ad Administrandum Sacramentum Poenitentiae* (Milan, 1604) simultaneously appeared in Italian translation.

<sup>48</sup> James Arthur (d. 1644), John Baptist Hackett (d. 1676), and John Roche, prior of Louvain in the 1690s. See Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 211; nos. 2206–8; nos. 4526–8; Thomas Flynn, *The Irish Dominicans, 1536–1641* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1993), 118–19.

<sup>49</sup> Augustin Gibbon Burke, *Theologiae Scholasticae in Divum Thomam*, 6 vols. (Mainz and Erfurt, 1669–76).

Inevitably Irish clerical writers, such as Gibbon Burke, were susceptible to changing trends in the intellectual milieu in which they studied and taught. Scotism dominated over Thomism in continental universities and seminaries down to c.1650, and its popularity in the early seventeenth century can be largely attributed to the scholarship and teaching of Irish Franciscan theologians at Louvain, Rome, and Prague. When Duns Scotus came under fire during the Jansenist controversy in the early 1620s, Bishop Hugh Magennis of Down and Connor and Hugh MacCaughwell (Aodh Mac Aingil), his erudite poet-confère, published Latin *apologias* in his defence at Paris.<sup>50</sup> Thereafter, MacCaughwell emerged as the Order's most distinguished Scotist scholar, his works including several Latin editions of Duns Scotus' writings,<sup>51</sup> and the mid-1650s and 1660s, in particular, witnessed an increase in the publication of Scotist works in Latin by members of his Order.<sup>52</sup>

From the early decades of the seventeenth century, in line with the majority of continental intellectuals, Irish Catholic clerics, especially the Jesuits and the Dominicans (though notably not the Franciscans), gravitated towards Thomism, as is evident in their Latin texts. Two particularly prolific Irish Jesuits, Stephen White at Dillingen and Richard Lynch in Spain, were vociferous advocates of Thomism in their Latin works published in the 1620s and 1670s, respectively, whereas the contribution of Irish Dominicans to Thomist studies in the mid- and late seventeenth century, though significant, was limited.<sup>53</sup> However, Irish devotees of Scotism were not entirely silenced in the late seventeenth century, the appearance of Patrick Collins and Francis Hadsor's *Theses ex Universa Philosophia Scotistica* (Rome, 1699) testifying to its enduring, albeit greatly diminished popularity.

By comparison, the output of theological works in Latin and continental languages by authors based in Ireland remained minuscule throughout the second half of the seventeenth century. Roger Boyle, Protestant Bishop of Down and Connor (and later of Clogher), and Sir William Petty published a handful of Latin books at Cork, Dublin, and London, whereas the Huguenot Elie Bouhéreau, first keeper of Narcissus Marsh's library, published a French translation of Origen's defence of Christianity at Amsterdam in 1700.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Hugh Magennis, *Apologia . . . pro Johanne Duns-Scoto Scripta Adversus Nicholaum Janssenium* (Paris, 1623); Hugh MacCaughwell, *Apologia pro Scoto Doctore Subtile contra Abrahamum Bzovium* (Paris, 1634). By then, MacCaughwell had published his edition of *F. Joannis Duns Scoti . . . Questiones Subtilissimae nunc Novitior Recognitae* (Antwerp, 1620).

<sup>51</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 1612; nos. 1613–16.

<sup>52</sup> These include Francis Brenan, Bonaventure O'Connor, Bonaventure Coman, and Bonaventure Baron. See also John Colgan, *Tractatus de Joannis Scoti . . . Vita, Patria, Eulogiis, Encomiasticis* (Antwerp, 1655); Angelus Mason, *Apologia pro Scoto Anglo* (Douai, 1656); and John Punch, *Scotus Hiberniae Restitutus* (Paris, 1660).

<sup>53</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 211; no. 2206; no. 3200; no. 2917; Millett, 'Irish Literature', 576; Pochin Mould, *The Irish Dominicans* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1957), 105; Flynn, *The Irish Dominicans*, 118–19.

<sup>54</sup> Roger Boyle, *Inquisitio in Fidem Christianorum hujus Seculi* (Cork, 1664, ESTC R173038) and *Summa Theologiae Christianae* (Dublin, 1681, ESTC R175571); William Petty, *Colloquium Davidis* (London, 1679, ESTC R5229); Elie Bouhéreau, *Traité d'Origene Contra Celse* (Amsterdam, 1700).

### *Irish Input into Controversial Theology*

One area characterized by lively intellectual exchange involving Irish writers in this period was controversial theology. From the early Elizabethan era, a succession of mainly Catholic Irish writers published controversial theological works, usually in Latin, some using pseudonyms. Richard Creagh, papal Archbishop of Armagh, was one of the first Irishmen to publish on controversies of the Catholic faith.<sup>55</sup> In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, three Dublin-born writers—Richard Stanihurst, Henry Fitzsimon, and Christopher Holywood—all of who were based on the Continent, further advanced Irish controversial theological debate.<sup>56</sup>

From the 1620s to the mid-seventeenth century, Irish clerics became embroiled in the Jansenist controversy. Florence Conry, Archbishop of Tuam, and John Sinnich, occasional dean of the faculty of theology and Semestral Rector of Louvain University, among others, published numerous Latin works on the contested issue of divine grace at Louvain, Paris, and Prague. Conry's contribution was especially influential as evidenced by the posthumous appearance of his *Peregrinus Jerichuntinus* along with a French translation at Paris in the 1640s.<sup>57</sup>

During the second half of the seventeenth century, Franciscan controversialists were to the fore in debating contentious political and theological matters of the day. In the early 1660s, when opinion on the Catholic Remonstrance in support of Charles II as lawful king was bitterly divided in Ireland, two Franciscans abroad, namely Peter Walsh and his friend and supporter, Raymond Caron, penned vigorous Latin defences of the declaration.<sup>58</sup> By contrast, their confrère, Francis Porter, president of Saint Isidore's College, confined his energies to controversial theology, publishing three substantial Latin works in the period 1674–81.<sup>59</sup> During their enforced sojourns on the Continent, certain Irish Catholic prelates, such as Peter Talbot, the Jesuit Archbishop of Dublin, published controversial works concerning ecclesiastical politics at home. While in France in the 1670s, Talbot produced his *Primatus Dublinensis*, in which he challenged Oliver Plunkett's assertion that the primacy of Ireland rested with the Archbishop of Armagh rather than Dublin.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 577; Colm Lennon, *An Irish Prisoner of Conscience in the Tudor Era: Richard Creagh, Archbishop of Armagh, 1523–86* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000).

<sup>56</sup> Christopher Holywood, *Defensio Decreti Tridentini et Sententiae Roberti Bellarmini* (Antwerp, 1604) and Henry Fitzsimon, *Britannomachia Ministrorum* (Douai, 1614).

<sup>57</sup> See *Abregé de la Doctrine de S. Augustin touchant la Grâce* (Paris, 1645); Sweeney, *Ireland*, 435–7.

<sup>58</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 578.

<sup>59</sup> Francis Porter, *Securis Evangelica* (Rome, 1674); idem, *Palinodia* (Rome, 1679); idem, *Syntagma* (Rome, 1681).

<sup>60</sup> See Millett, 'Irish Literature', 578; Peter Talbot, *Primatus Dublinensis* . . . (Lille, 1674).

Although the Augustinians' contribution to theological scholarship in general was very limited during the seventeenth century, the Order claimed two of the most highly regarded Irish controversial theologians of their day. Augustine Gibbon Burke's remarkable *De Luthero-Calvinismo, Schismatico quidem sed Reconciabili* (1663) revealed an in-depth knowledge of the reformers' confessions and the points on which they were divided, and secured his reputation as the most influential, though not the most original, Irish controversial theologian.<sup>61</sup> In the early 1680s, another distinguished theologian from Galway, Francis Martin, who lectured in France and Louvain, began publishing controversial works in Latin, principally on Jansenism, papal infallibility, and the Gallican Church.<sup>62</sup> In Ireland, a small number of Presbyterian and Protestant writers also contributed to the field of controversial theology. Ralph Hollingworth, a Presbyterian divine, published a Latin work in support of the reformers' teaching on justification through faith alone in 1640,<sup>63</sup> and Roger Boyle, Ireland's leading Protestant controversial theologian of the late seventeenth century, published two Latin works in 1664 and 1681.<sup>64</sup>

### *The Contribution of Irish Writers to Biblical Studies*

A handful of Irish Franciscan and Jesuit scholars abroad made a modest contribution to biblical studies through their Latin works that appeared during the seventeenth century.<sup>65</sup> In Ireland, apart from the accomplished biblical scholar James Ussher,<sup>66</sup> only the orientalist and polyglot Dudley Loftus made a real impact in this field, notably with his Ethiopic version of the New Testament, featured in Walton's Polyglot Bible (1657), and his Latin translation of David's psalms (Dublin, 1661).<sup>67</sup>

### *Miscellaneous Religious Works*

In addition to the main body of theological scholarship, a wide variety of ancillary foreign language religious publications, principally sermons and catechisms, were penned by Irish men abroad or published in Ireland during the seventeenth century. Again, Jesuits and Franciscans were largely responsible for the publication of Latin sermon books at Antwerp, Lisle, Lyon,

<sup>61</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 577; Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 738.

<sup>62</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 579.

<sup>63</sup> Ralph Hollingworth, *De Justificatione ex Solâ Fide* (Dublin, 1640, ESTC S116604); Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 2337.

<sup>64</sup> Boyle, *Inquisitio*; idem, *Summa*.

<sup>65</sup> These were Luke Wadding, O.F.M.; Raymond Caron, O.F.M.; Paul Sherlock, S.J.; and Peter Redan, S.J.

<sup>66</sup> See Millett, 'Irish Literature', 568, 575.

<sup>67</sup> Dudley Loftus, *Liber psalmorum Davidis* (Dublin, 1661, ESTC R30832); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 575; Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 2872.

Salamanca, and Cologne,<sup>68</sup> whereas a handful of Latin and bilingual catechisms were published by Irish Franciscan and secular clerical scholars in Italy and Spanish Flanders during the 1630s and 1670s.<sup>69</sup> Among those Protestant works that appeared were the Latin sermons of Nicholas Walsh, Bishop of Ossory, the sole pre-1701 Dublin printing of the French translation of the *Book of Common Prayer* (Dublin, 1665), and a French translation of Bishop Edward Synge's *A Gentleman's Religion* (Amsterdam, 1699).<sup>70</sup> A small number of predominantly Latin texts relating to contentious aspects of ecclesiastical administration in the Catholic, Protestant, and Huguenot churches were also published in Ireland and abroad from the 1620s onwards.<sup>71</sup>

Throughout the seventeenth century, tensions in Ireland among English, Old English, and Gaelic Irish, as well as among secular and regular clergy and clerics of different Orders and provinces continued to erupt sporadically. Inevitably, this was replicated within Irish communities on the Continent and in the Latin polemical discourse of Irish writers as illustrated in the Paul Harris–Francis O'Mahony dispute of the early 1630s and the Thomas Carew–Anthony Broudin–Cornelius O'Mollony row of 1669–72.<sup>72</sup>

### *Publications in the Field of Philosophy*

In an era when it was the norm for highly accomplished Irish clerical scholars such as Hugh MacCaghwell to apply their mastery of philosophy to theology, dedicated Irish philosophers were rare. Although at least sixteen Irish authors published philosophical works during the period 1550–1700, and some such as Dudley Loftus pioneered the publication of philosophers' work in Latin translation in Ireland,<sup>73</sup> only one Irish scholar can be said to have made a truly significant contribution to learning in this field. This was the Franciscan friar John Punch. His opus on Scotist philosophy, which was first printed at Rome in 1642 and went into five editions by 1672, broke away from

<sup>68</sup> Barnabas Kearney, *Heliotrophium*... (Lyon, 1622); Richard Lynch, *Sermones Varios* (Salamanca, 1670); Francis Burke, *Bibliotheca Succincta et Portatilis* (Cologne, 1691); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 579.

<sup>69</sup> James Miles, *Brevis Catechismus* (Naples, 1645); Theobald Stapleton, *Catechismus* (Brussels, 1639); Francis O'Molloy, *Lucerna Fidelium* (Rome, 1676); Raymond Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early Seventeenth Century', *IESH*, 15 (1988), 86–7.

<sup>70</sup> *La Liturgie. C'est à dire le Formulaire des Prières Publiques de l'Église d'Irlande*, ed. Jacques Hierosme (Minister of the French Church, Dublin); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 579.

<sup>71</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 823; no. 866; no. 1077; no. 1430; no. 1470; no. 2176; no. 2973; no. 5298.

<sup>72</sup> Francis O'Mahony, *Examen Juridicum Censurae Facultatis Theologiae Parisiensis*... (Frankfurt, 1631); Paul Harris, *Arketomastix*... (Dublin, 1633, ESTC S116527); Anthony Broudin, *Propugnaculum Catholicae* (Prague, 1669); Cornelius O'Mollony, *Anatomicum Examen*... Thomas Carve (Prague, 1671); Thomas Carew, *Responsio Veridica ad Illotum Libellum*... P. Cornelii O Mollonii Editum (Sulzbach, 1672); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 580; MacCraith and Worthington, 'Literary Activity of the Irish Franciscans', 130–1.

<sup>73</sup> Aristotle, *Logica seu introductio in totam Aristotelis philosophiam*, ed. Dudley Loftus (Dublin, 1657, ESTC R172505).

the classical commentaries and presented a fresh, comprehensive course in philosophy and theology.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, the contribution of Irish scholars to the study of logic was dismal, only the Latin works of Thomas Gowan (fl.1683), a Presbyterian minister and schoolmaster from Ulster, being received with acclaim.<sup>75</sup>

## The Contribution of Irish Scholars to Medical and Scientific Knowledge

Although Irish advances in medical scholarship were equally unspectacular, from the 1610s, a dozen or so Irish medics published mostly Latin treatises on diseases, on their stance in relation to current academic debates in the field, and on the state of medical practice in Ireland. Tipperary-born Dermod Meara's treatise on hereditary disease (Dublin, 1619) was the first Latin medical textbook published in Ireland.<sup>76</sup> The works of other Irish-based medics including Meara's son, Edmund, Conly Cassin, and John Jones were published in London and Dublin during the 1660s and 1680s.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, Jacobus Sylvius, a Dutch doctor practising in Dublin during the 1680s, had his Latin tract on fevers printed by a local press.<sup>78</sup> The small number of Irish physicians who studied and practised medicine in France and Italy, most notably Neil O'Glacan from Donegal and John O'Dwyer, a native of Cashel, published Latin texts at Toulouse, Boulogne, and Mons.<sup>79</sup> In the late seventeenth century, Bernard Connor, Ireland's most prodigious physicians, produced several Latin works, both on the Continent and in England, the most controversial featuring his attempt to explain New Testament miracles by reference to 'the principles of physick'.<sup>80</sup>

Notwithstanding its poor record in producing illustrious physicians, Ireland was home to some of the finest scientists of this era. Among these were Capt. Robert Fitzgerald, whose treatises on rendering salt-water drinkable

<sup>74</sup> John Punch, *Integer Philosophiae Cursus ad Mentem Scoti* (Rome, 1642); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 580.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas Gowan, *Ars Sciendi sive Logica* (London, 1681, ESTC R188142, R38754); idem, *Logica Elenctica* (Dublin, 1683, ESTC R177580).

<sup>76</sup> Dermod Meara, *Pathologia haereditaria Generalis* (Dublin, 1619, ESTC S100843) was reprinted twice within fifty years.

<sup>77</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 939; nos. 2623–6; no. 3009.

<sup>78</sup> Jacobus Sylvius, *Novissima idea de Febribus* (Dublin, 1686).

<sup>79</sup> Neil O'Glacan, *Tractus de Peste* (Toulouse, 1629); idem, *Cursus Medicus* (Boulogne, 1655); John O'Dwyer, *Querela Medica seu plactus Medicinae Moderna Status* (Mons, 1686).

<sup>80</sup> Bernard Connor's books include *Lettre écrite à Monsieur le Chevalier Guillaume de Waldegrave ... Contenant une Dissertation Physique* (Paris, 1692?), *Seu Mirabilis Vivientim Interitus in Charonea Neapolitana Crypta Dissertio Physica* (Cologne, 1694), *Dissertationes Medico-Physicae de antris Lethiferis* (Oxford, 1695, ESTC R18918), and *Evangelium Medici seu Medecina Mystica* (London, 1697, ESTC R224478, R29325).

appeared in Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian translation in the 1680s and 1690s,<sup>81</sup> and Sir Hans Sloane, a doctor from County Down, whose *Catalogus Plantarum quae in Insula Jamaica* (London, 1696) earned him the reputation as the first great Irish botanist. Yet the achievements of these scholars pale into insignificance when compared with the innovation of Robert Boyle. Within a year of its publication in 1661, Boyle's first work, *The Sceptical Chemist* was translated into Latin and achieved wide circulation among European scholars.<sup>82</sup> Thereafter a substantial number of Boyle's works, which were almost without exception published in English in London or Oxford, were quickly translated, usually into Latin.<sup>83</sup> In 1663, the first Latin version defining Boyle's Law appeared and in 1696–7 the first complete Latin edition of his works was published at Venice.<sup>84</sup> From the early 1680s, German, Dutch, and French translations of his texts were printed throughout the Continent, chiefly at Leipzig, Lindau, Paris, Amsterdam, Geneva, and Rotterdam. The widespread availability of Boyle's work in Latin and continental languages ensured that his ground-breaking theories reached a sizeable continental audience, gaining him recognition as one of the great scientists of early modern Europe.<sup>85</sup>

## The Growth in Popularity of Commemorative and Celebratory Publications

From the early seventeenth century, Irish men at home and abroad displayed a growing fondness for marking significant events in the lives of dignitaries by publishing monographs, elegies, epigrams, verses, sermons, and laudatory addresses, usually in Latin. In Dublin, the deaths of 'Black Tom' Butler, tenth Earl of Ormond (d.1615), Catherine Boyle (d.1630), and her son, Robert (d.1692), were marked by the publication of English and Latin elegies in London and Dublin.<sup>86</sup> A small number of Latin funeral sermons and orations in honour of particularly eminent ecclesiastical and government dignitaries, including Archbishop John Bramhall of Armagh, were also printed in Dublin during the 1660s.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 1912, 1915–21.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 496–7.

<sup>83</sup> In the case of only two of Boyle's works, the Latin version took precedence over the English.

<sup>84</sup> Robert Boyle, *Defensio Doctrinae de Elatere & Gravitate Aëris* (London, 1663, ESTC R228313); *idem*, *Opera Varia* (Geneva, 1677); *idem*, *Opera Omnia... Tomus I, II & III* (Venice, 1696–7).

<sup>85</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, 83–94.

<sup>86</sup> Dermot Meara, *Ormonius* (London, 1615, ESTC S114537); *Musarum Lachrymae... in Obitu... Catharinae comitissae Corcagiae* (Dublin, 1630, ESTC S121023); De Urginy, *Illustrissimi Domini Roberti Boyle Epitaphium* (London, 1692, ESTC R38001).

<sup>87</sup> Dudley Loftus, *Oratio Funebris... Johannis Archiepiscopi Ardmachani...* (Dublin, 1663, ESTC R3002); John Jones, *Threnodia in Obitu Honoratissimi Wentworthii Kildariae Comitissae, Baronis de Ophalia* (Dublin, 1664, ESTC R179028) and *Oratio Funebris... Mauritiū Eustace* (Dublin, 1665, ESTC R25122).



On the Continent, throughout the seventeenth century, Irish scholars, especially Franciscans, published celebratory verse and orations, usually in Latin. Their purpose was to honour the papacy, members of the royal families of Europe, or eminent ecclesiastics, or alternatively, to mark significant dates in the calendar of their host countries, the Irish Catholic Church, or their own religious communities.<sup>88</sup> Certain scholars, notably the Franciscan Christopher Chamberlain, acquired a reputation for their skill in composing Latin obituaries, elegies, addresses, poetry, and prose. A native of Ulster and one of the first six students to enrol at St Isidore's College, he published at least nine of his Latin compositions, mainly congratulatory addresses and elegies, during the 1620s and 1630s.<sup>89</sup> However, none of these literary figures could rival the scholarship of Ireland's most accomplished humanist writer, Bonaventure Baron (d.1696), prelector of divinity at St Isidore's. Between 1633 and 1685, Baron wrote just under twenty Latin books of verse, epigrams, panegyrics, eulogies, prolusions, portents, epistles, biographies, and a defence of Duns Scotus.<sup>90</sup>

## The Contribution of Irish Linguistic Specialists

During the seventeenth century, three Irish scholars based on the Continent published in the fields of lexicography and linguistics.<sup>91</sup> The work of William Bathe, S.J., Rector of the Irish College at Salamanca, was especially influential. His *Janua Linguarum* (Salamanca, 1611) proved a highly popular text featuring a system for teaching languages. Originally published in Latin and Spanish, the book passed through numerous editions and enlargements. It was expanded to incorporate English and French and in 1629, a six-language version (German and Italian having been added) was printed at Strasbourg.<sup>92</sup> In the 1670s, a small selection of Latin linguistic texts and anthologies, including the *Anthologia Latina*, a popular text with students attending Dublin city schools, and Elisha Coles's Latin–English and English–Latin lexicons, were published in Ireland.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 4530; no. 2918; no. 3223; no. 3251; no. 3299; no. 4485; no. 5290; nos. 5303–5; no. 5498.

<sup>90</sup> Millett, 'Irish Literature', 581; Sweeney, *Ireland*, nos. 299–317.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 957–66.

<sup>91</sup> William Bathe, *Apparatus*; Balthazar Fitzhenry, *Explicatio Syntaxis et Aliorum Elegantiae Semonis Latini Inservientium* (Madrid, 1676); idem, *Thesaurus Verborum Hispano-Latinis* (Madrid, 1679); Francis O'Molloy, *Grammatica Latino-Hibernica nunc Compendiata* (Rome, 1677).

<sup>92</sup> Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 332.

<sup>93</sup> Emmanuel Alvarez, *Prosodia* . . . (Dublin, 1671, ESTC R170288); *Anthologia Latina* (Dublin, 1674, ESTC R172486); Millett, 'Irish Literature', 581.

## Production Costs, Patronage, and Motivations for Publishing

In an era when it was considered vulgar for an author to be paid by his publisher, Irish writers relied upon royalty, nobility, gentry, Irish merchants and soldiers, senior ecclesiastics abroad, and even priests based in Ireland to pay for the publication of their books, which often featured dedications in acknowledgement of the patron's generosity. Occasionally, religious Orders or institutes sponsored major research projects. The Franciscans lent their full support to Luke Wadding's publication of a multivolume Latin history of the Order (Lyon, 1625–48).<sup>94</sup> Similarly, the sixteen-folio volume Latin edition of the works of John Duns Scotus published at Lyon in 1639 was the fruit of a major collaborative venture involving the Franciscans at St Isidore's in Rome and St Anthony's, Louvain.<sup>95</sup> However, such substantial works were exceptional, and only a very small proportion of Irish writers had sufficient funds at their disposal to enable them to incorporate plates, plans, engraved title pages and frontispieces, woodcuts, and engraved dedication plates in their books.

During the period 1550–1700, Irish authors published their works for a wide variety of reasons. In the case of clerical authors, their early classical schooling, followed by their clerical training and association with the great universities of Spain, Flanders, France, Italy, and central Europe, cultivated their love of learning and encouraged them to publish. Some directed their more esoteric publications at an initiated academic readership whereas others appear to have been primarily motivated by a wish to engage in polemics. A desire to honour a patron saint, patriotic fervour, the drive to foster a sense of collective identity among Catholics in Ireland and on the Continent, a wish to inculcate Counter-Reformation Catholicism in Irish Catholics—all of these motivated Irish clerical writers to publish. Others sought to educate literate society regarding medical and scientific innovations, to entertain with verse, to mark special occasions with addresses, sermons, and elegies, or to publicize recent political developments in Ireland and abroad.

## Importation and Distribution of Foreign Language Books

It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which these books either reached or were read in Ireland. Firstly, the identification of importation and distribution

<sup>94</sup> Luke Wadding, *Annales Minorum* . . . , 8 fols. in 7 vols. (Lyon, 1625–48); Benignus Millett, 'Guide to Material', in Franciscan Fathers (eds.), *Father Luke Wadding Commemorative Volume*, 241; idem, 'Irish Literature', 583.

<sup>95</sup> See Millett, 'Irish Literature', 583–4; Sweeney, *Ireland*, no. 1615.

patterns prior to the development of the Dublin trade in the early 1680s is problematic. Secondly, Catholic books published by Irish clerics abroad were regarded as seditious by the government and port authorities and were therefore smuggled into the country. Thirdly, as the practice of Catholicism was illegal and Catholic bishops and priests were obliged to carry out their ministry on a clandestine basis, comparatively little evidence of their book collections survive. It is, however, possible to make some substantive observations regarding the channels by which these books were imported into Ireland, the means whereby they were circulated, and their place in Irish libraries during this era.

Foreign language books were imported into Ireland directly from continental ports and also via English cities and ports, particularly London, Chester, Bristol, and Newhaven throughout this period.<sup>96</sup> Although copies of foreign language Catholic books were available from Irish booksellers in the seventeenth century, restrictions on the sale of such works rendered the commercial importation and distribution networks unreliable, at least until the late 1600s.<sup>97</sup> Prior to this, control of the trade in such books lay in the hands of well-organized networks of clerics on the Continent, in England, and in Ireland. Irish Jesuits, Franciscans, Dominicans, and secular clergy throughout Europe routinely smuggled large consignments of Catholic foreign language books (concealed in barrels, chests, and packets) directly into Ireland. Within religious Orders, it was the sole task of designated individuals such as John O'Connor, O.P. (d.1678) to procure and dispatch this Counter-Reformation literature to recusant Catholics and to their communities in Ireland.<sup>98</sup> The Irish Dominicans imported several shipments of books from Spain during the period 1636–41, and by the 1690s, the Franciscan friaries at Kilconnell and Meelick in County Galway each housed a library of between thirty-four and forty Latin titles of Counter-Reformation theology.<sup>99</sup> Irish émigrés, who were settled in European cities such as Rouen, also

<sup>96</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996); R. J. Hunter, 'Chester and the Irish Book Trade, 1681', *IESH*, 15 (1988), 89–93.

<sup>97</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'The Circulation of Print in Seventeenth-Century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica*, 29 (1995–7), 47–8.

<sup>98</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the manuscripts of the earl of Egmont*, 2 vols. (London, 1905), i. 58; Brendan Jennings (ed.), *Louvain papers, 1606–1827*, (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1968), 447. These smugglers evidently had a good deal of success as Fr John O'Cullin, based in Kerry diocese, funded the publication of an *Ordo* at Toulouse in 1676 with a view to its being used by Irish missionaries upon their return home. See Patrick Power, 'An "Ordo" for Ireland in 1676', *Irish Book Lover* (May–June 1935), 73.

<sup>99</sup> Brendan Jennings, 'The Chalices and Books of Kilconnell Abbey', *Journal of the Galway Archaeological and Historical Society*, 21 (1944–5), 69–70; Cathaldus Giblin, 'Papers Relating to Meelick Friary, 1644–1731', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 16 (1973), 71–2; Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 49.

acted as agents, arranging the shipment of such outlawed works to Ireland.<sup>100</sup> Merchants were enlisted to transport consignments of these books either on commission or as part of a cargo; for example, a ship seized at Cork in 1617 contained Latin Bibles and several other Latin works.<sup>101</sup> Individual Catholic clerics returning from their studies in continental European universities or from temporary exile also brought Latin and European vernacular language religious books back to Ireland. Missionaries bound for Ireland were often supplied with standard liturgical texts along with other pious works to assist them in their ministry in Ireland. Newly appointed bishops returning from the Continent brought with them collections of foreign language books they had amassed during their sojourn abroad. For example, while Maurice MacBrien, Bishop of Emly, was en route home from France in 1578, six Latin primers were discovered in his luggage. Similarly, Luke Wadding, Bishop of Ferns, undoubtedly amassed much of his sizeable collection while he studied and taught in Paris prior to his appointment as Vicar General of Ferns in 1668.<sup>102</sup> In addition, clerics arranged for Catholic laymen abroad to take religious books back to Ireland from England and the Continent.<sup>103</sup> Although a large number of these were both sold and distributed without charge to Catholic congregations, late seventeenth-century scholarly prelates such as Wadding, Piers Creagh, Archbishop of Dublin, and William Daton, Bishop of Ossory, reserved most of their books for private study.<sup>104</sup>

Of course not all foreign language books in Ireland were either Catholic or illegally imported: since the mid-sixteenth century, Latin and French books in particular were legitimately imported into Ireland and a modest number of Latin texts were published in Dublin.<sup>105</sup> However, it was not until the closing decades of the seventeenth century that a marked increase in the availability of non-Catholic Latin and French books to Irish scholars, prelates, physicians men, and aristocrats occurred. Prior to this, Irish scholars, collectors, and booksellers, who were virtually starved of foreign language publications, acquired recently published books through various contacts on the

<sup>100</sup> Benignus Millett, 'Calendar of Volume 1 (1625–68) of the Collection *Scritture Riferite nei Congressi, Irlanda*, in *Propaganda Archives*', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 6 and 7 (1963–4), 40; Gillespie, 'Book Trade in Southern Ireland', 7, 9; Brian Mac Cuarta, 'Old English Catholicism in Chester Documents, 1609–19', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 56 (2003), 4–8.

<sup>101</sup> Gillespie, 'Book Trade in Southern Ireland', 9.  
<sup>102</sup> Benignus Millett, 'Maurice MacBrien, Bishop of Emly, and the Confiscation of his Baggage, March 1578', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 34 and 35 (1992–3), 10–14; Patrick Corish, 'Bishop Wadding's Notebook', *Archivium Hibernicum*, 29 (1970), 49–90; Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 49.

<sup>103</sup> Mac Cuarta, 'Old English', 5.

<sup>104</sup> See Corish, 'Bishop Wadding's Notebook'; Canice Mooney, 'The Library of Archbishop Piers Creagh', *Reportorium Novum*, 1 (1955–8), 117–39; Hugh Fenning, 'The Library of Bishop William Daton of Ossory, 1698', *Collectanea Hibernica*, 20 (1978), 30–57.

<sup>105</sup> *Cal. S.P. Ire.*, 1663–65, 698; Gillespie, 'Irish Printing in the Early-Seventeenth Century', 87–8; idem, 'Book Trade in Southern Ireland', 16.

Continent and in England, especially London. Many bibliophiles such as William Molyneux, founder of the Dublin Philosophical Society, purchased books directly from booksellers on the Continent. James Ussher, who liaised regularly with Catholic scholars abroad, undoubtedly received copies of publications from these authors in addition to purchasing many of his foreign language books in London. He also passed on copies of his works to various contacts in Ireland.<sup>106</sup> In the early seventeenth century, collectors such as the Earl of Clanrickard enlisted the services of merchants to buy books on their behalf whilst they traded in continental ports.<sup>107</sup> Others such as William King, Archbishop of Dublin, had accounts with London booksellers and received books (some as gifts) from relatives and friends resident in London or on the Continent.<sup>108</sup>

From the 1680s in particular, the commercial network of booksellers and their agents assumed increased control over the importation and distribution of books in Ireland, including foreign language publications.<sup>109</sup> In the late 1690s, William Norman, and John Ware, both Dublin booksellers, held auctions at which they sold Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin works in a wide variety of disciplines.<sup>110</sup> By then, more informal networks for the exchange of such publications had also evolved, as it became common practice for collectors such as William King to lend their books to friends and acquaintances.<sup>111</sup>

## The Composition of Seventeenth-Century Irish Libraries

The most popular foreign language books by Irish authors in seventeenth-century Protestant and Catholic episcopal libraries were those penned by David Rothe, Richard Stanihurst, James Ware, James Ussher, Peter Lombard, Philip O'Sullivan Beare, Thomas Messingham, and Luke Wadding.<sup>112</sup> The Limerick-based medical doctor, Thomas Arthur, displayed

<sup>106</sup> Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 63–4, 157; Millett, 'Irish Literature', 568; Gillespie, 'Book Trade in Southern Ireland', 2.

<sup>107</sup> Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 48.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 42. In 1601, Dr Luke Challoner of Trinity College, Dublin, purchased Latin books (ranging in value from £13 10s 0d to 6d) from a bookseller at Aldersgate. See William O'Sullivan, 'The Library before Kinsale', *Annual Bulletin of the Friends of the Library of Trinity College Dublin*, 7 (1952), 10.

<sup>109</sup> Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 37.

<sup>110</sup> Francis O'Kelley, 'Irish Book-Sale Catalogues before 1801', *Bibliographical Society of Ireland*, 6(3) (1953), 37–8, 45; Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books*, 62.

<sup>111</sup> Gillespie, 'Circulation of Print', 53.

<sup>112</sup> TCD, MS 6 Catalogue of Ussher's library as given to TCD in 1666; TCD, MS 790 Catalogue of books bought by James Ussher in 1606; Hugh Jackson Lawlor, 'Primate Ussher's Library before 1641',

a typical fondness for the Latin works of these authors.<sup>113</sup> However, although Latin and French books still composed a substantial proportion of the library collections of Irish aristocrats and scholarly gentlemen in the 1680s and 1690s, the popularity of these early seventeenth-century writers diminished as collectors enthusiastically embraced the unprecedented range of fashionable foreign language books on the Irish market, including those written by one of Ireland's few female authors, Lady Eleanor Douglas.<sup>114</sup> There were, of course, some exceptions, notably the Latin works of Richard Stanihurst, Sir James Ware, and Thomas Messingham, which continued to be read by students of Trinity College, Dublin, in the 1680s.<sup>115</sup>

## Conclusion

The publication of foreign language books by Irish writers or relating to Ireland increased dramatically throughout the course of the seventeenth century. Despite their limited number and the restriction of their circulation to scholarly and clerical circles, these books proved immensely important for Irish scholarship, laying the foundations for early modern Irish historiography, hagiography, martyrology, theology, medical and scientific theory, linguistics, and literature. It was not, however, until the end of the seventeenth century that books published in European vernacular languages secured a significant niche in the Irish market.

*PRIA*, 22C (1900–2), 216–64; Representative Church Body Library, Dublin, MS 25, ff. 98v–101r, Account book of Henry Jones, Bishop of Meath, 1661–81; *A Catalogue of Books of the Right Reverend Father in God Dr Samuel Foley, Late Lord Bishop of Down and Connor* (Dublin, 1695, ESTC R228123); Elizabethanne Boran, 'The Libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, 1595–1608', Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 75–115; Robert S. Matteson and Gayle Barton, *A Large Private Park: The Collection of Archbishop William King 1650–1729*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: LP Publications, 2003); Corish, 'Bishop Wadding's Notebook'; Mooney, 'Library of... Creagh'; Fenning, 'Library of... Daton'.

<sup>113</sup> E. A. MacLysaght and John F. Ainsworth, 'The Arthur Manuscript', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 8 (1958–61), 79–87.

<sup>114</sup> Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormond Preserved at Kilkenny Castle*, new ser., 7 vols. (London, 1912), vii. 513–27 (Duke of Ormond's library, 1680s); Marsh's Library, MS Z4.5.14, A catalogue of Dudley Loftus's books (1689); NLI, MS 11,048, f. 141, List of C. Wilkinson's books (1692); TCD, MS 10, Catalogue of Charles Willoughby's library (n.d., late 1600s inferred); Eleanor Douglas, *Apocalypsis Jesu Christi* (n.p., 1644, ESTC R171819); idem, *Prophetic de die* (London, 1644, ESTC R171821). Other novel works included Aesop, *Fabulae* (Dublin, 1696, ESTC R172125); Arthur Annesley, *Bibliotheca Anglesiana sive Catalogus Variorum Librorum* (London, 1686, ESTC R30816); Thomas Bray, *Bibliotheca Parochialis* (London, 1697, ESTC R9382, R175576); and Giovanni Battista de Burgo, *Viaggio de Cinque Anni in Asia Africa & Europa del Turco*, 3 vols. (Milan, 1686–9).

<sup>115</sup> TCD, MS 2087 Record of books on loan from TCD, 1686–7.

# Foreign Language Books, 1700–1800

*Máire Kennedy*

‘At this Enlightened period, when the Polite languages of Europe are disseminated for the intercourse of Knowledge, Elegance of Taste, and Advantage of Science through its various Kingdoms, Ladies and Gentlemen [are invited] to supply themselves with the finest Editions of the Polite Literature of the Continent.’<sup>1</sup> Thus read an advertisement by Antoine Gerna, foreign language bookseller, and one-time teacher of French and Italian, in Dublin in 1788. At this time an audience was well established for foreign language books, book-buyers who were aware of cultural trends in Europe and who considered themselves part of an international elite: cultivated, well travelled, well read, and well informed. Yet this audience had emerged over a relatively short time frame. Although an interest in works in the European vernacular languages was apparent in learned circles for several centuries, it was in the second half of the eighteenth century that the readership base expanded to include the urban middle classes. As French replaced Latin as the lingua franca in Europe, statesmen, businessmen, and scholars needed French for information gathering and exchange. Young men and women sought to acquire a veneer of sophistication by the use of French in correspondence and in social interchanges. As more young men of fashion made the grand tour, French and Italian studies became a desirable part of their education, and leisure reading reinforced, and helped to perfect, their knowledge.

Foreign language books were imported from France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland from the late seventeenth century. Works in French and Italian were the most widely available foreign language publications of the eighteenth century. Spanish and Portuguese remained as marginal-interest languages. Often it was the early classics, such as *Don Quixote* and Camões’ *Os Lusíades*, which retained their popularity, however few contemporary Spanish or Portuguese works made their way to Irish book buyers. Works in

<sup>1</sup> *Freeman’s Journal*, 8–10 April 1788.

the languages of northern Europe, German, Dutch, Danish, Finnish, Swedish, and Norwegian, were confined to merchants and scholars. Local publication of foreign language books also occurred, but on a relatively modest scale. French books formed the earliest and greatest percentage of these productions. The first French language books to emerge from the Irish presses catered for the religious and educational needs of the Huguenot congregations. From mid-century works of the French Enlightenment, and books in French of more general appeal, were reprinted for the local market, and from the 1770s this output increased. A very small number of Italian works was locally printed. The readership for these foreign language works is not easy to identify. Studies based on the use of book subscription lists, private library catalogues, provenance indicators, booksellers' catalogues, and advertising have allowed some tentative conclusions to be reached, and a potential audience to be sketched. The use of letters, diaries, and other contemporary records provide supporting evidence.

## Teaching of Modern Languages

Towards the end of the seventeenth century educational writers began to propound the advantages of a modern, career-oriented education. This idea was embraced by the rising middle classes in Ireland, as elsewhere in Europe, during the eighteenth century. Private academies providing this type of education, and veering away from the purely classical curriculum that had been the norm, sprang up in Irish cities and towns from the first decades of the century. In the first half of the century French was the main European language taught. To support this teaching, grammars, dictionaries, and readers were imported and locally printed. It was not until the second half of the century that Italian entered the curriculum, and it occupied a lesser place. Of schools teaching French, just over 10 per cent in Dublin, and about 6 per cent in provincial towns, also taught Italian.<sup>2</sup> Teachers advertised their qualifications, stressing their abilities to teach languages grammatically. Emphasis was placed on the spoken language as well as on the written, and a good accent was considered important. Mr Walenbergh taught French and Italian in Dublin in the 1770s 'after an entirely new and concise method', whereas Madame Pillegrini taught English, French, and Italian 'by the analytic and synthetic methods, in giving a philosophical knowledge of languages in general', and Madame Burnelle taught French 'with the true Parisian accent, upon the

<sup>2</sup> Figures are derived from the listing of schools teaching French undertaken for a Ph.D. thesis, Mary Elizabeth (Máire) Kennedy, 'French Language Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Dissemination and Readership', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University College, Dublin, 1994.



best grammatical principles'.<sup>3</sup> At Carey's Classical School in Dorset Street, Mr Carey informed the public that he had 'been upwards of eight years in France, and studied the French language under some of the best professors in the University of Paris'; French was spoken by his boarders 'at meals and in play-time'.<sup>4</sup> The masters at the French Academy in Coal Lane announced in 1773 'as there are many gentlemen, who being instructed in the principles of the French, wants only practice to be perfect therein. There is in the academy a convenient room, where at night, from six to eight o'clock, will be a lecture and dissertation in French'.<sup>5</sup> Those who attended the private academies and boarding schools were the sons and daughters of the professional classes, business people, and lesser gentry. Private tutors and governesses were employed by better-off families, or by those who did not have easy access to formal schooling.

This increase in educational opportunity at middle-class level ensured a wider audience for European literature in its original language. Catholic families with trading connections in Europe, and family members in the continental armies and the church, often had their children schooled in French, and possibly Italian and Spanish, to prepare them for careers abroad. In 1775 John Hely-Hutchinson, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, introduced modern languages, French, German, Italian, and Spanish, at university level.<sup>6</sup> He hoped that modern language teaching 'will be the means of enabling young gentlemen of fortune to finish their education at home, and will send them abroad more capable of receiving improvement from their travels, when they are acquainted with the languages of the countries which they visit'.<sup>7</sup> The two professors appointed were R. Antonio Vieyra Transtagano, a Portuguese émigré from London and author of a number of language textbooks, to teach Italian and Spanish, and Antoine D'Esca, a Huguenot from Berlin, to teach French and German. They were granted honorary degrees of L.L.B. by the college upon their appointment.<sup>8</sup>

An examination of 200 private library catalogues reveals the existence of modern language dictionaries and grammars in the majority of libraries.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 23–5 January 1776; *Saunders's News Letter*, 26 November 1798; *Dublin Evening Post*, 18 August 1798.

<sup>4</sup> *Volunteer's Journal*, 5 January 1784.

<sup>5</sup> *Public Monitor, or New Freeman's Journal*, 23–6 January 1773.

<sup>6</sup> M. M. Raraty, 'The Chair of German at Trinity College, Dublin 1775–1866', *Hermathena*, 102 (Spring 1966), 53–72.

<sup>7</sup> [John Hely-Hutchinson], *Account of Some Regulations Made in Trinity College Dublin Since the Appointment of the Present Provost* (Dublin, 1775, ESTC T190221). Reprinted in the *Freeman's Journal*, 4–7 February 1775.

<sup>8</sup> Raraty, 'Chair of German'; Máire Kennedy, 'Antoine D'Esca: First Professor of French and German at Trinity College Dublin', *Long Room*, 38 (1993), 18–19.

<sup>9</sup> A sample of 200 catalogues or lists of private libraries of named owners, covering 100 years from the early eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, was examined to determine the foreign language component of private libraries.

Dictionaries and grammars in European languages often appeared in libraries where no texts in the language were present. The range of European languages represented is large: French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch, and Flemish. These texts were held as reference works within personal libraries, showing a certain engagement with other languages, and a willingness to decipher texts in these languages for literary, scholarly, or business purposes. French dictionaries and grammars predominate; for other European languages it was often the French-language versions that were held.<sup>10</sup> The presence of these works indicates that Irish readers approached other European languages through French. This may have been largely due to the availability in Ireland of a wide range of texts imported from the Continent, aimed primarily at francophone readers. London editions of French and Italian dictionaries and grammars for English speakers were available, and Dublin editions of French dictionaries and grammars were also published.

### Importation of Foreign Language Books

It was in the late seventeenth and during the eighteenth century that books in the European vernacular languages found a foothold in the Irish market, at first in scholarly circles. Huguenot booksellers were involved in the importation and sale of French-language books in Ireland in the first half of the eighteenth century, but the part they played was relatively minor. They catered for the public at large and usually stocked a general range of titles in English, Latin, and French, but without showing a marked specialization. William Binauld claimed to have been dealing in books 'this twenty years last past' at his retirement in 1726.<sup>11</sup> He served the Huguenot community in Dublin, even though his business was more general. In June 1712 he was one of the selling agents for Francis Dickson's publication *An Apology for the French Huguenots* and its French version *Apologie des François Réfugiés Establis en Irlande*.<sup>12</sup> In 1715 he published *La Liturgie* with *Les Psaumes de David* for the use of the French Anglican churches, and in 1724 he was one of the subscription agents for the publication of Cavalier's *Memoirs of the Wars of the Cevennes*.<sup>13</sup> He imported a portion of his stock from Holland, and in 1722 he advertised 'all sorts of

<sup>10</sup> Examples include Veneroni's *Dictionnaire Italien et François* and *Le Maître Italien*; Antonini's *Dictionnaire Italien, Latin et François*, and *Grammaire Italienne*; Oudin's *Dictionnaire François et Espagnol*, *Grammaire Italienne*, and *Grammaire Espagnole*; Sobrino's *Dictionnaire nouveau des langues Française et Espagnole* and *Grammaire nouvelle Espagnolle et Française*; Clamopin's *French and Portuguese grammar*; Winkelman's *Dictionnaire François Hollandois et Hollandois François*; Halma's *Dictionnaire Flamand et François*; and Gottsched's *Grammaire Allemande*.

<sup>11</sup> *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 28 May 1726.

<sup>12</sup> *Dickson's Dublin Intelligence*, 21 June 1712.

<sup>13</sup> *Dublin Gazette*, 2–5 May 1724.

French and Latin Books . . . at very reasonable Rates', offering subscribers to Rapin's *History of England* insurance against the 'Dangers of the sea' on its way from The Hague.<sup>14</sup>

The 1720s saw a number of Dublin booksellers embark on the importation business on a large scale. John Smith and William Bruce began to import French books for sale in Dublin from 1725, using William Smith as their continental book-buyer in Amsterdam. Prior to this Smith and Bruce had imported their stock from England and very little foreign language material was evident in their advertisements. From June 1726, when they advertised 'books newly publish'd abroad', their stock of French-language books increased considerably.<sup>15</sup> Their published catalogues of 1726 and 1728 show that 23 per cent of their stock was in French, with 39 and 45 per cent, respectively, given over to the classics. The greater part of their French-language books were published in Paris (40 per cent) and Amsterdam (22 per cent), the remainder being issued from other publishing centres in France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.<sup>16</sup> Smith and Bruce catered for a wealthy clientele, providing new books and works of antiquarian interest, and they were willing to take orders: 'they can, upon a few month's advice, supply any gentleman with whatever scarce and curious books they may want from time to time, that are not present in the kingdom'.<sup>17</sup> John Smith continued to import continental publications until his retirement in 1758, by which time his proportion of French-language books was something less than one-third, and he had begun to stock a small number of Italian titles.<sup>18</sup>

The early importers of foreign language books were the large well-established booksellers and book auctioneers who imported titles for the scholarly market, and the Huguenot booksellers, who traded in a smaller capacity and supplied their compatriots as well as the community of scholars. Much of the French material imported at this period was from the Netherlands, where an active reprint trade guaranteed lower prices. Several Irish booksellers had contacts in the Netherlands, most notably Smith and Bruce with Amsterdam, and Peter de Hondt of The Hague, who supplied the Irish market through the Dublin booksellers Peter Lautal and Jean-Pierre Droz. Importation from the Netherlands was facilitated by direct sea routes relatively free from interruption during the wars between England and France, when the French book trade suffered greatly. The 'dangers of the sea', however, were always present,

<sup>14</sup> *Dublin Courant*, 29 December 1722.

<sup>15</sup> *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 11 June 1726.

<sup>16</sup> *A Catalogue of Books, Newly Arrived from England, Holland and France. To be Sold by Smiths and Bruce* (Dublin, 1726; ESTC T202832). *A Catalogue of Books. Sold by John Smith and William Bruce* (Dublin, 1728, TCD, Worth Collection).

<sup>17</sup> *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 11 March 1727.

<sup>18</sup> *Catalogue of Books being the Bound Stock of John Smith, Bookseller on the Blind-Quay, . . . to be sold by Auction by William Ross . . . on Thursday 13 April 1758* (ESTC T208690); *Remainder of the Stock of John Smith will be sold by Auction . . . by William Ross, 7 December 1758* (ESTC T213583); *Universal Advertiser*, 16–19 December 1758.

and ensured a large mark-up on the prices of books sold in Dublin over their counterparts available in the Netherlands. Significant numbers of books published in France, at Paris, Lyons, and Rouen, were available throughout the first half of the century. The decade of the 1750s saw an alteration in demand for foreign language books, noted by contemporaries. The emphasis veered away from the wealthy men of letters who had been the mainstay of the market, and a wider section of the reading public, seeking popular and entertaining literature in French, began to emerge.

An attempt at shaping the market can be seen at mid-century, when booksellers sought to target audiences for publications in the European vernacular languages. A review periodical entitled *A Literary Journal* was published in Dublin from 1744 to 1749, with Jean-Pierre Droz as editor, and a continuation, *The Compendious Library, or Literary Journal Revived*, from 1751 to 1752, with Antoine Desvoeux as editor. The aim of these periodicals was to provide the Irish reading public with notices of recently printed foreign language books in French, Latin, German, or Dutch, and to give abstracts of some of the more noteworthy. The abstracts of new books were mostly taken from French periodicals and translated into English.<sup>19</sup> Droz, a minister of the French church at St Patrick's and editor of *A Literary Journal*, derived his main income from the sale of books at his bookshop on College Green. He specialized in imported foreign language publications. An advertisement for his latest stock of imported books appeared in volume iv of *A Literary Journal*, listing French (about two-thirds of titles), Latin, and a small number of Spanish titles, made up of dictionaries, history, religion, memoirs, travel, architecture, periodicals, and 'a great variety of the amusing kind' such as Voltaire, Corneille, Molière, and *Don Quichotte*. The last is possibly the French translation printed by Peter de Hondt that featured in the literary news from The Hague in *A Literary Journal* (1745), in a large quarto edition with woodcuts by Coypel and Picart Le Romain. The titles represented serious literary and scholarly tastes and were aimed at those able to afford the best of continental publications. Through his reviews and articles in *A Literary Journal* Droz encouraged the book-buying public to interest themselves in literary news from the intellectual centres of Europe. By giving abstracts of the latest publications in the French, German, and Dutch languages he kept readers au fait with new books and thereby created a demand, which he was able to satisfy from his imported stock.

The sale of books by priced catalogue was employed by many booksellers throughout the century, especially those who wished to appeal to a countrywide readership. During the 1760s Laurence Flin at the Bible in Castle Street,

<sup>19</sup> Jean-Paul Pittion, '“A Literary Journal” (Dublin, 1744–9): Reflections on the Role of French Culture in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Hermathena*, 121 (Winter 1976), 136–7.

Dublin, issued annual catalogues of his imported stock.<sup>20</sup> Typically, from 10 to 15 per cent of titles in the catalogues were in French, 1 to 2 per cent in Italian, and less than 1 per cent in Spanish, German, Portuguese, and Dutch. The catalogues included literature, and works on science, history, memoirs, and periodicals such as the *Journal Littéraire*, *Bibliothèque Française*, and *Bibliothèque Germanique*. Popular works by Fénelon, Fontenelle, Le Sage, Marivaux, Montesquieu, and Voltaire were available in French and in translation. George Conolly of Galway, issuing a catalogue in 1799, had over 34 per cent of his stock in French and nearly 2 per cent in Italian.<sup>21</sup> Specialization in foreign language books became a feature of the Irish book trade in the last quarter of the century, with booksellers such as Antoine Gerna, Luke White, John Archer, William Wilson, and R. E. Mercier in the front ranks, making their stock available in bookshops and by catalogue. From about 1775 importation of French and Italian books on a large scale by many Dublin booksellers points to the vitality of the market. Popular books were imported in cheap editions, but luxury editions of popular books were also sold. Expensive works of a more literary and learned nature continued to find a market among Irish book-buyers. Book catalogues dedicated to French and Italian publications were issued, and booksellers traded directly with book production centres on the Continent, especially with Paris, Amsterdam, The Hague, and Neuchâtel. These specialists in the field of foreign language imports in the last quarter of the century had a large turnover and could display a breadth of stock not equalled at any other time during the century.

A number of Dublin booksellers were recognized in continental book-selling circles, Thomas Ewing, Thomas Todd Faulkner, and William Wilson appearing in the *Manuel de l'Auteur et du Libraire* in 1777 and 1781, and William Wilson's name turning up in false imprints of works published on the Continent.<sup>22</sup> In March 1779 Wilson advertised a list of forty-four French titles, the leading title being De Félice's *Encyclopédie*.<sup>23</sup> The emphasis of the

<sup>20</sup> [Laurence Flin], *Flin's Catalogue of Books for 1761 and 1762* (Dublin, 1761, ESTC T194426); for 1763 (Dublin, 1762, ESTC T194425); for 1764 (Dublin, 1763, ESTC T194424); *Second part 1764* (Dublin, 1764, ESTC T207634); for 1766, pt 1 (Dublin, 1765, ESTC T194674); for 1767, pt 1 (Dublin, 1766, ESTC T194423); for 1767, pt 2 and 1768 (Dublin, 1767, ESTC T197655); for 1769 (Dublin, 1768, ESTC T194427); for 1770 (Dublin, 1769, ESTC T194429).

<sup>21</sup> *Conolly's Catalogue of Books* ([Galway, George Conolly, 1799], ESTC T166004); English language 51.5 per cent, French 34.3 per cent, classics 12.4 per cent, Italian 1.8 per cent.

<sup>22</sup> Giles Barber, 'Pendred Abroad: A View of the Late Eighteenth-Century Book Trade in Europe', in *Studies in the Book Trade in Honour of Graham Pollard* (Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society, 1975), 231–77; [Jean-Pierre-Louis de Luchet], *Le Vicomte de Barjac, ou Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire de ce Siècle*, 2 vols. (Dublin, de l'imprimerie de Wilson, et se trouve à Paris, chez les libraires qui vendent des nouveautés, 1784, ESTC N48522); *Mémoires de Madame la Duchesse de Morsheim, ou Suite des Mémoires du Vicomte de Barjac*, 2 vols. (Dublin, de l'imprimerie de Wilson, et se trouve à Paris, chez les libraires qui vendent des nouveautés, 1786, 1787, ESTC T205855); *Le Songe de Mirabeau sur la Révolution Française sous Louis XVI* (Dublin, 1792, ESTC T74388).

<sup>23</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 20–3 March 1779.

list was historical and literary with some light reading included. In March 1784 he published a list of sixty-six French books lately imported, this list favouring Enlightenment authors: Berquin, Buffon, Crébillon, de Beaumont, de Genlis, Marivaux, Marmontel, Maupertuis, Mercier, Montesquieu, Raynal, Rousseau, and Voltaire (see Figure 24).<sup>24</sup> Trading directly with continental suppliers meant an immense variety of reading matter in the European vernacular languages was available in Irish bookshops. Prices, however, were high, as transportation and insurance costs ensured a major mark-up. In 1777 Luke White informed the nobility and gentry that 'he will be regularly supplied with the new publications from France, Italy and London'.<sup>25</sup> To achieve this aim he began to trade directly with the Société Typographique de Neuchâtel late in 1779. In the first year he was supplied with the Société's thirty-nine volume quarto edition of the *Encyclopédie*.<sup>26</sup> In the six years of their trade relations he imported more than 150 titles, including individual titles and sets of *Oeuvres complètes* by Voltaire and Rousseau.<sup>27</sup> By 1784 he could claim to be 'constantly supplied with every Book of Merit in the English, French and Italian Languages'.<sup>28</sup> His general sale catalogues, issued annually, contained about 20 per cent of titles in French and about 4 per cent in Italian. His extant catalogue of 1779 offered 'a numerous Assortment of the finest Editions of the best modern Books in the English, French, Italian and Spanish Languages, lately imported'.<sup>29</sup> Seventy-five titles from his catalogue of 1784 were advertised in the press, confirming a wide range of expensive continental imports, including sets of the Neuchâtel *Encyclopédie*, selling for £30.<sup>30</sup> In addition to the general catalogues he issued catalogues dedicated to French and Italian literature. In November 1777 the *Catalogue of French and Italian Books* had a print run of 750 copies, yet none have survived.<sup>31</sup> An advertisement for the catalogue listed twenty-four French and six Italian titles.<sup>32</sup> Two further dedicated French and Italian catalogues were printed for White, in March 1785 and January 1787.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 16–18 March 1784.

<sup>25</sup> *Hibernian Journal*, 3–5 November 1777.

<sup>26</sup> Hugh Gough, 'Book Imports from Continental Europe in Late Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Luke White and the Société Typographique de Neuchâtel', *Long Room*, 38 (1993), 35–48; Máire Kennedy and Geraldine Sheridan, 'The Trade in French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in Graham Gargett and Geraldine Sheridan (eds.), *Ireland and the French Enlightenment, 1700–1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 173–96. Robert Darnton, *The Business of Enlightenment: A Publishing History of the Encyclopédie 1775–1800* (Cambridge Mass.: Belknap Press, 1979), 309, appendix B, 592.

<sup>27</sup> Gough, 'Book Imports', 43.

<sup>28</sup> *Volunteer's Journal*, 4 October 1784.

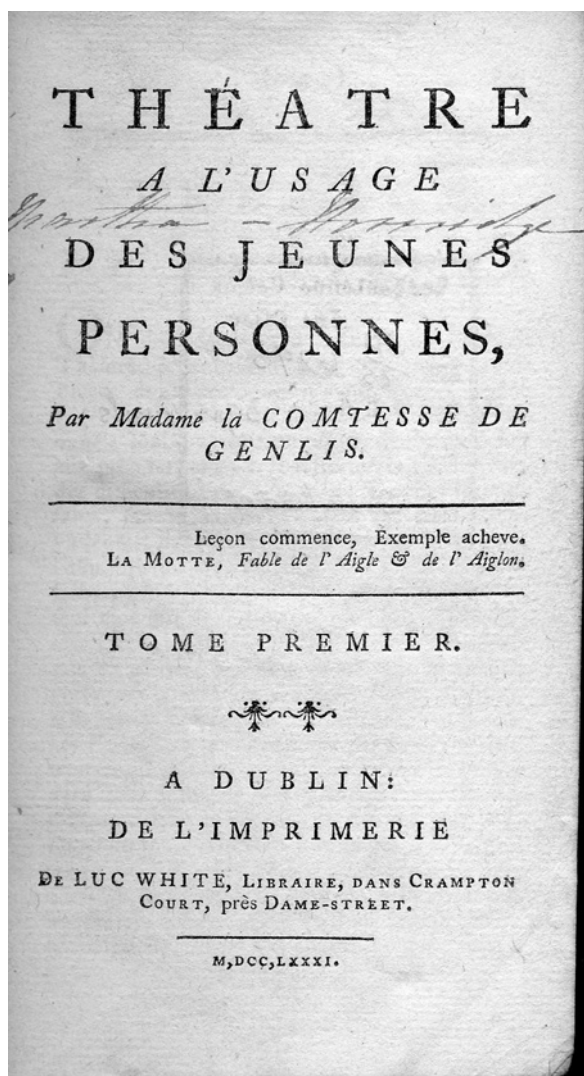
<sup>29</sup> *White's Catalogue, for 1779. A Catalogue of Several Thousand Volumes... Which Will Begin Selling... this day, November 1778* (Dublin, 1778, ESTC T184835); *Hibernian Journal*, 2–4 November 1778.

<sup>30</sup> *Volunteer's Journal*, 21 June 1784.

<sup>31</sup> TCD, MS 10314, Graisberry Ledger 1777–1785, 25 October 1777.

<sup>32</sup> *Hibernian Journal*, 3–5 November 1777.

<sup>33</sup> TCD, MS 10314, Graisberry Ledger, 21 March 1785; *Freeman's Journal*, 20–3 January 1787.



12. Stéphanie Félicité, Comtesse de Genlis, *Théâtre à l'usage des jeunes personnes* (1781).

Antoine Gerna offered his foreign language books for sale by auction in the early years of his business, issuing catalogues of French and Italian books in 1787 and 1788.<sup>34</sup> His stock was purchased on the Continent and he offered to take commissions for 'Gentlemen in the bookline' when he visited Paris in the summer of 1788.<sup>35</sup> By 1793 Gerna's book importation business was

<sup>34</sup> *Freeman's Journal*, 15-17 March 1787; 8-10 April 1788.

<sup>35</sup> *Dublin Chronicle*, 24 July 1788.

thriving, his only extant catalogue, *Catalogue des Livres François, Italien*, being issued that year; over 80 per cent of the titles were in French, 11 per cent in Italian, and less than 1 per cent in Spanish, German, and Dutch.<sup>36</sup> In his early career John Archer had imported stock from England but the 1790s saw his trade with the Continent expand and develop; he went abroad in person to purchase stock. In October 1791, he went to London, Paris, and other centres on the Continent to procure 'the most valuable, rare and expensive works' and he expressed his willingness to take commissions from customers.<sup>37</sup> In July 1792 he once again set out for London, Paris, and Venice 'for the purpose of enlarging his present extensive Collection of Books'.<sup>38</sup> The fruits of this buying expedition are to be found in the substantial sale catalogue of 1793. Archer spent four months on the Continent in 1799 where he took commissions for books, purchasing French books for Christopher Dillon Bellew in Galway, and probably also for other customers.<sup>39</sup> Archer's extant general catalogues for 1789 and 1793 contained 8 to 10 per cent French-language titles, 1 to 2 per cent in Italian, and less than 1 per cent in Spanish, German, and Portuguese. In 1801 he issued a priced catalogue devoted to French and Italian literature, containing 564 titles in continental editions, of which 80 per cent were in French and 20 per cent in Italian.<sup>40</sup>

In June 1793 Richard Edward Mercier announced that he 'has opened a correspondence with the great company of booksellers, Wilde and Altheer, at Utrecht, by which he will be enabled to supply those who honour him with commissions, on the easiest terms, and in the shortest possible time. Their large catalogue he will soon receive, he has a smaller one for the inspection of the curious.'<sup>41</sup> Mercier's importation of foreign language books continued into the nineteenth century. In 1802 he advertised that he would be 'regularly supplied with every Book of character published on the Continent, having a permanent correspondence in France, Germany and Italy'.<sup>42</sup> Provincial booksellers were less likely to have had direct dealings with continental suppliers. Most imported their stock from London, or through a wholesale agent in Dublin. However, in 1773 William Flynn, a bookseller in Cork, advertised foreign language books imported from Holland. He announced that he had established a correspondence with a 'principal Bookseller in Holland, who is remarkable for elegant and cheap editions'. He kept a

<sup>36</sup> [Antoine Gerna], *Catalogue des Livres François, Italien*, &c. de Antoine Gerna, Libraire à Dublin (Dublin, 1793, ESTCT132926).

<sup>37</sup> *Dublin Chronicle*, 6 October 1791.

<sup>38</sup> *Dublin Chronicle*, 28 July 1792.

<sup>39</sup> NLI, MS 27293, Bellew Papers, letters, 20 July 1799, 5 December 1799.

<sup>40</sup> *A Catalogue of French and Italian Books, Imported and Sold by J. Archer, Bookseller, Commercial Buildings* (Dublin, 1801).

<sup>41</sup> *Anthologia Hibernica*, i (June 1793), 450.

<sup>42</sup> *Hibernian Journal*, 22 April 1802.



catalogue from which purchasers could choose 'Foreign Books in any language' and which would be sold on reasonable terms.<sup>43</sup>

Changes in reading patterns, which made way for the inclusion of European literature in its original languages, was becoming apparent after mid-century. French works in Irish bookshops and private libraries were plentiful in the areas of literature, history and politics, science and medicine, memoirs, estate management, voyages and exploration; Italian works concentrated on literature, history, art, architecture, and music; and Spanish works were made up mainly of literature, religious works, and history. Books in other European vernacular languages were slower to penetrate the Irish book-buying market. The existence of grammars and dictionaries for the major European languages in Irish private libraries points to an interest in reading texts in their original languages, or at least a wish to decipher certain portions of texts.

## Local Publication

Throughout the eighteenth century imported titles greatly outnumbered local printings of foreign language works. The output of Irish printing presses was largely in the English language; texts in the classical languages were produced for scholarly and educational purposes; and some Irish-language texts were issued. The numbers of foreign language books printed in Ireland always remained small. The *Dublin Catalogue of 1786*, a publication listing books printed in Ireland from 1700 to 1786, shows over 95 per cent of publications in English, 2.5 per cent in French, and 2 per cent in Latin and Greek. The English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), which lists surviving titles only, indicates that 98 per cent of the production of Irish presses was in English, with 1.3 per cent made up of the classics, and 0.5 per cent in French.<sup>44</sup> Only five titles in Italian are recorded from the eighteenth century, and they consist of plays and librettos, whereas there is no evidence for publication in other European languages.

The interesting aspect of local production of foreign language works is that it should have occurred at all. In the first decades of the eighteenth century the impetus came from the Huguenot community, and in particular from its clergy, many of whom had already published sermons and religious treatises in the Netherlands and London. Works for use in the French churches ensured a ready-made market: *La Liturgie*, the Anglican rite in

<sup>43</sup> *Hibernian Chronicle*, 25 October 1773.

<sup>44</sup> *A Complete Catalogue of Modern Books, (printed in Ireland) From the Beginning of this Century to the Present Time* (Dublin, 1786, ESTC T163026); ESTC.

French, with the *Psalms of David*, and other religious works formed the earliest phase of this demand. Pedagogical books in French and treatises composed by the Huguenot clergy followed quickly. Where the evidence exists, it shows a strong support for these works by the tightly knit Huguenot communities in several enclaves around the country. In the first decades of the century the exiles were made up of military and commercial families, closely linked by their regional origins in France and Switzerland, and by intermarriage and religious sponsorship in Ireland. French-language works published in Ireland in the first half of the century were otherwise of interest in learned circles, especially within Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>45</sup>

From the 1760s, however, a much wider book-buying public existed for books in European languages. At this period importation from London and the Continent ought to have been enough to satisfy the general market, yet Irish printers considered it economically worthwhile to print certain titles in Ireland. It was the practice of booksellers to import copies of French works likely to be bestsellers and to reprint them locally. This saved on the cost of carriage and insurance associated with importing books in bulk, and Irish printers, used to producing reprints, were able to issue them quickly to satisfy fashionable consumers. The French-language works published in Dublin, with a small number from Cork and Belfast, covered a range of subjects, with the emphasis on literature, religion, schoolbooks, and social and political affairs. Works of French Enlightenment authors were reprinted in Ireland for local consumption. Chief among these were books by Voltaire, Marmontel, and Raynal, with the works of Madame de Genlis, Madame Leprince de Beaumont, Le Sage, and Fénelon being used extensively in education.<sup>46</sup> Luke White issued the works of Madame de Genlis in French in typical printruns of 500.<sup>47</sup>

## Book Ownership/Readership

By the second half of the eighteenth century persons at many levels in Irish society were capable of conversing in French and possibly Italian, and of reading in at least one foreign language. Evidence from letters and diaries gives some idea of the scale of foreign language competence in certain circles. The Duchess of Leinster, her extended family, and social entourage were well versed in French language and literature. The survival of nearly 2,000 letters,

<sup>45</sup> Máire Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001).

<sup>46</sup> ESTC; Graham Gargett, 'List of Books Connected with French Enlightenment, 1700–1800', in Gargett and Sheridan, *Ireland and the French Enlightenment*, 243–84.

<sup>47</sup> Kennedy, *French Books*, 83.

covering a fifty-year span, permit a glimpse of their world in which reading played a significant role.<sup>48</sup> A French nobleman, the Marquis de Bombelles, visiting Carton, the home of the Duchess of Leinster, in 1784 remarked that ‘of twelve women, ten spoke very good French. All the women of the best society in England and Ireland know the language’.<sup>49</sup> Surviving letters by members of the Edgeworth family, including Maria and her father, Richard Lovell, Dean Jonathan Swift, Dean Patrick and Mrs Mary Delany, Alicia Syngé and her father, Edward, Bishop of Elphin, Betsy Sheridan, sister of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Edmund Burke, Henry Grattan, Theobald Wolfe Tone, Dr William Drennan, and Henry Joy McCracken of Belfast allow us to confirm the ability to read in French. Dr Thomas Sheridan, Lord Charlemont, Dr Frederick Hervey, Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry, Henry George Quin, and Joseph Cooper Walker, the antiquary, were fluent in French and Italian. Revd. John O’Brien, Catholic Bishop of Cloyne and author of the Irish–English dictionary *Focalóir Gaoidhíle-Sax-Bhéarla* (Paris, 1768), could speak, read, and write in English, Irish, Latin, French, and Italian; he also knew Spanish, Greek, and Hebrew. Richard Kirwan, the scientist, could read and write in nine languages, including French, Italian, Spanish, and German. Kirwan, in a letter to Tornbern Bergman, professor of chemistry at Uppsala, stated his preference for corresponding in French: ‘Vous possédez la langue françoise si bien que je puis vous adresser dans cette langue qui m’est bien plus familiere que la latine’.<sup>50</sup> Translating was one of the ways of keeping one’s grasp on a foreign language. Dr Thomas Sheridan, the friend of Swift, could read and write in French, Italian, and Spanish, as well as Greek and Latin; he translated Guarini’s *Il Pastor fido* into English, and the two-volume manuscript of the translation has survived.<sup>51</sup> As a young woman Maria Edgeworth translated Madame de Genlis’ *Adèle et Théodore*, but it was not published.<sup>52</sup> We find that in later life Henry Grattan ‘amused himself translating into French Miss Edgeworth’s *Tales* and other light works. He admired Racine and Corneille, and used to read them with much pleasure.’<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Brian Fitzgerald (ed.), *The Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster (1731–1814)*, 3 vols. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1949–57).

<sup>49</sup> Marc de Bombelles, ‘Journal de Voyage en Grande Bretagne et en Irlande 1784’, Texte Transcrit, Présenté et Annoté par Jacques Gury, *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 269 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1989), 245.

<sup>50</sup> NLI, microfilm p. 3661, Eleven Letters from Richard Kirwan to Torbern Bergman, 6 October 1783 (Uppsala: Universitetsbiblioteket).

<sup>51</sup> Dublin City Libraries, Gilbert Library, MSS 121–2, Thomas Sheridan, ‘The Pastor Fido of Signor Battista Guarini, Translated from the Italian [by Dr. T.S.]’, 2 vols.

<sup>52</sup> F.V. Barry, *Maria Edgeworth: Chosen Letters* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1931), 47.

<sup>53</sup> Henry Grattan, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Rt Hon. Henry Grattan, by his son Henry Grattan, Esq., M.P.*, 3 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1839–41), i. 248.

Book sale catalogues and listings of private libraries constitute a flawed indicator of book ownership: valuable libraries of prestigious owners were most likely to be auctioned, whereas the holdings of more modest book owners and readers remain unknown. However, in the absence of more complete sources, they do give some indication of the range and type of books available to readers at certain social levels. An examination of 200 catalogues of named owners revealed that over 95 per cent held some quantity of books in French, and many had large and wide-ranging collections. Not including dictionaries or grammars, works in Italian were present in over 43 per cent of libraries in the sample, Spanish in over 21 per cent, and German, Dutch, and Portuguese in smaller numbers.<sup>54</sup> Several European works were present in English, French, or Italian translations, most notably Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, Aléman's *Guzmán de Alfarache*, Camões' *Os Lusíades*, Goëthe's *Sorrows of Werther*, Dante's *La Divina Commedia*, and the works of Boccaccio, Boiardo, and Ariosto in English and French; and *Gil Blas*, *Les Aventures de Télémaque*, and the works of Marmontel in English and Italian.

The French works that appeared most in Irish private library catalogues were a combination of the classic texts of French literature—such as Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque*, Le Sage's *Gil Blas de Santillane*, *Les Oeuvres de Boileau*, the plays of Molière, Racine, and Corneille, and the *Fables* of La Fontaine—and contemporary Enlightenment texts, the works of Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Fontenelle, Marmontel, Raynal, and Mercier. The great reference works of the *république des lettres*, including different editions of *L'Encyclopédie*, were held in many private libraries.<sup>55</sup> Religious works by the celebrated Catholic preachers Fénelon, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and Fléchier also found a place. In Italian the older works, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*, *Rime di Petrarca*, Tasso's *Aminta* and *Gerusalemme Liberata*, Tassoni's *La Secchia Rapita*, and Machiavelli's works were held alongside contemporary works, Goldoni's plays, *Opere di Metastasio*, *Abecedario Pittorico*, and the historical works of Davila, *Storia delle Guerre Civili di Francia*, and Guicciardini. Architecture, painting, theatre, and opera as well as guides and histories of individual cities and places in Italy were prominent among Italian-language books. In Spanish, literature, religion, and history predominated: *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, *Persiles y Sigismunda*, and *Novelas ejemplares*, Aléman's *Guzmán de Alfarache*, De Solís' *Historia de la Nueva España*, Mariana's *Historia de España*, Ferrera's *Historia de España*, and the works of

<sup>54</sup> See note 9. French 95.5 per cent, Italian 43.5 per cent, Spanish 21.5 per cent, German 4 per cent, Dutch 3.5 per cent, Portuguese 3 per cent.

<sup>55</sup> Examples include *Bibliothèque Universelle*, *Bibliothèque Choisie*, *Bibliothèque Ancienne et Moderne*, Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, and the journals *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, *Journal des Savants*, *Journal Littéraire*, and *Bibliothèque Raisonnée*.

Garcilaso de la Vega, Quevedo, and Luís de Granada occurred in private collections.

## Conclusion

Why did eighteenth-century readers wish to learn a European language, and why did they want their children to learn modern languages at school? By the eighteenth century demand and opportunity coincided. People at certain social levels wished to read and speak French, in particular, for cultural, commercial, or scientific reasons. We know from letters and diaries that people read and spoke various European languages, but it does not come across as anything unusual; they place no special emphasis on the fact. Among scholars aptitude in several European languages was essential for communication. Among fashionable elites reading and speaking French and Italian conferred a degree of sophistication and polish. Literary men and women had a broad interest in the literatures of Europe and sought to read them in the original language. Merchants and traders needed French, and possibly Spanish, to control their business interests on the Atlantic seaboard. By the second half of the century many well-to-do young men and women had been educated in French and Italian either by private tutors or in the many private academies that specialized in a 'modern education' that included European languages. The grand tour, undertaken by an increasing number of fashionable young men and women in the second half of the century, allowed them to perfect their knowledge of these languages as part of finishing their education. Ireland was not as isolated as its situation might suggest. Transport by sea was easier than overland routes; heavy goods were carried by sea between Irish coastal towns, because of the difficulty of carriage by road. Maritime contacts with England and Europe were regular and people travelled the routes frequently. Families had members living and working in different parts of Europe in commerce, education, the church, and the armies of different states.

The easy availability of continental editions, expensive at first in the early decades of the century, but becoming more affordable after mid-century, helped to foster reading in the European vernacular languages. Costs of transport and insurance added to the consumer price of imported books, but as foreign language titles were purchased from London, and particularly, as they were reprinted in Dublin, costs began to come down. By the last quarter of the century Dublin-printed foreign language books had the same retail cost as their English-language counterparts.

V

SOURCES FOR PRINT

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## Sources for the History of the Early Modern Book in Ireland

*Raymond Gillespie*

The primary sources for the reconstruction of the history of the early modern book in English are diverse and scattered. Since book history crosses traditional areas of enquiry and is focused not on institutions but on objects and their users there are no neat bodies of archival material that can be seen to be the obvious preserve of the book historian. References to books and their uses are as likely to be found in the records of the central administration as they are among the private papers of individuals. The identification of sources may perhaps best proceed not by examining the points at which the book touched the administrative structures that generated records, but rather by considering the cycle of communication of which the book was part. Books typically might pass from author to printer, then to the bookseller, and finally to the reader. There were, of course, a number of variants on this pattern. In the seventeenth century, in particular, the Irish booksellers acquired much of their stock not from Dublin printers but from merchants or directly from London printers. Again once a reader had extracted as much as he or she wanted from a book it might move further as either a loan or a gift, or into a wider world through a second-hand dealer, events that often leave little traces in the surviving evidence. At each of these points there were constraints, such as government controls on the press or censorship, literacy or the affordability of books, which restricted their circulation. Documentation relevant to book history can be found in a variety of records at each of the points in this communications circuit. Customs records, for instance, are clearly important for tracing patterns of trade in books whereas business files or guild records throw light on the workings of the print trades. Personal diaries and marginal manuscript notes in printed books are equally important in providing insights into the consumption of the book as commodity.

In the seventeenth century most books in Ireland were imports. Charting the volume and chronology of the trade is a difficult process since most of the



customs records generated within seventeenth-century Ireland have not survived. However, by judicious use of the English and Scottish trade records, since those countries were the main suppliers of books to Ireland, it is possible to reconstruct something of the movement of books into the country. In particular the port books of Chester and Bristol in PRO, E190 document the nature of the trade. The late-sixteenth-century entries in the Bristol books are unusually detailed, even to the point of recording book titles in some cases.<sup>1</sup> In the later seventeenth century the customs information for both Chester and Bristol is more basic, listing the merchant and the quantity of books imported.<sup>2</sup> For the Scottish trade, mainly with Ulster, the port books for Glasgow and the ports on the west coast of Scotland (Scottish Record Office, E79) provide slightly more detailed information, usually describing generic groups of books such as 'psalters' or 'Bibles'. From the 1690s the customs records become more comprehensive, detailing quantities of books imported to and exported from Ireland in PRO, Customs 15. Much of this material has been analysed in Mary Pollard's *Dublin's Trade in Books* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989). From such evidence it is possible to reconstruct the main features of the Irish book trade.

In comparison to the evidence for the import trade the surviving documentation on printing in Dublin itself is thin. Printers' names, for instance, are known mainly from the imprints of the books themselves rather than from more detailed sources. Before the 1680s there was only one printer in Dublin—the King's Printer. Most of the evidence for the reconstruction of the careers of the successive holders of that office has been gathered together in Mary Pollard's *Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Print Trade, 1550–1800* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000). Similarly Pollard has also assembled the evidence for the lives of later printers such as John Ray and John Brocas. However, little is known about how printers operated or ran their businesses. There is only fragmentary surviving evidence on the costs of printing books in Ireland or the sizes of print runs in the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> By the eighteenth century there is more material with which to reconstruct the world of the printers. Subscription lists (see below), for instance, make it possible to estimate crudely the length of runs while indicators of production costs also begin to emerge. Business records, for example, allow the reconstruction of something of the commercial world of print, albeit in a rather fragmentary form. Among the muniments of Trinity College, Dublin, for example, there is a good deal to be gleaned about the

<sup>1</sup> See Raymond Gillespie, 'The Book Trade in Southern Ireland, 1590–1640', in Gerard Long (ed.), *Books beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 2–9, 12–13.

<sup>2</sup> R. J. Hunter, 'Chester and the Irish Book Trade, 1681' *IESH*, 15 (1988), 89–93.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Pollard, 'Printing Costs, c. 1620', *Long Room*, 10 (1974), 25–9.

financing and output of the University press in the late eighteenth century. Similarly the survival of the Graisbury ledgers allows a more detailed reconstruction of a printer's business in the late eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> From a rather different perspective the correspondence of one of the most celebrated Dublin printers of the eighteenth century, George Faulkner, illuminates not only his relationships with the literati but also something of his business affairs.<sup>5</sup> More mundanely there is evidence to be found in the Dublin newspapers, and later the provincial press, which carried advertisements for newly produced books.

Of course one of the main sources for the history of book making are the books themselves. The technical side of book production including type faces, ornaments, and layout remains largely unexplored; yet, this is the key to understanding how printers worked. It is an area that would repay much further study.<sup>6</sup> Much better studied are the titles produced by both the Dublin and the provincial presses. There exists a wide range of finding aids, mainly compiled by E. R. McClintock Dix, to the output of the Dublin and provincial presses.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the published work, Dix's working papers, together with those of Francis O'Kelley, who died in 1950, contain extensive notes and lists of printings in particular towns.<sup>8</sup> In a rather different way Tony Sweeney's eclectic *Ireland and the Printed Word, 1475-1700* (Dublin: Eamon De Búrca, 1997) gathers together work not only on books produced in Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but also books relating to the country published in continental Europe and elsewhere. Again access to bibliographic records generated by the electronic edition of the English Short Title Catalogue, together with the new finds revealed by the project, has made the task of locating the output of specific printers and places much easier than it has been in the past.

Once books had been printed it was a matter for the booksellers to distribute them. As with book production there is a dramatic difference in the quantity and quality of the evidence available for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For the seventeenth century almost nothing is known about the Dublin booksellers and their world. Many can be identified because their

<sup>4</sup> Vincent Kinane and Charles Benson, 'Some Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century Dublin Printers' Account Books: The Graisbury Ledgers', in Peter Isaac (ed.), *Six Centuries of the Provincial Book Trade in Britain* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), 139-50.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Ward (ed.), *Prince of Dublin Printers: The Letters of George Faulkner* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1972).

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, J. W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin, 1670-1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 151-286 for these issues in a Dublin context.

<sup>7</sup> For a bibliography of Dix's work see E. R. McC. Dix, *Printing in Dublin Prior to 1601*, 2nd edn. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1971), 34-40b.

<sup>8</sup> O'Kelley's papers are now in the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin. Dix's papers are now in NLI, MSS 3942-6, 3960-71, 3972-7, 4262-7, 5360-5, 5457-8. R. R. Madden's work for an unpublished volume on the history of the periodical press is in Dublin Public Libraries, Pearse Street, Gilbert MSS 263-74.

names appear on the imprints of published works and Pollard's *Dictionary of the Members of the Dublin Print Trade, 1550–1800* gathers together the available material on such men and women. In a number of cases they also feature in the Chester port books, described earlier, as importers of books. A combination of the evidence of imports and imprints allows some reconstruction of the scale of the operations of these individuals. Most importantly the Guild records of the Guild of St Luke, to which printers and stationers belonged, have survived.<sup>9</sup> Although these records shed little light on the internal financial workings of the print trade they do reveal a great deal of the politics of that world and the way in which print was regulated and organized in eighteenth-century Ireland.

The lack of business records for the Dublin retail book trade makes it difficult to reconstruct the day-to-day business of these men. There is only one seventeenth-century document that lists customers and their book purchases. Eight pages of the daybook of Samuel Helsham have survived for March to May 1685, in which he recorded the book and stationery purchases of his customers.<sup>10</sup> Outside Dublin the only known evidence for the workings of the trade is the handful of names that appear in imprints and the names of those who gave their trade as stationer when they were admitted to freedom in towns although only a handful of such records survive before 1700. However, research on both Dublin and provincial booksellers has shown what can be achieved by using a judicious combination of sources such as imprints, newspaper and almanac advertisements, and booksellers' own printed lists of what they had for sale.<sup>11</sup>

Booksellers might offer books for sale but discovering what was bought by potential readers is a different problem. Ireland lacks the long runs of documents, such as probate inventories, which have been used to good effect in charting the patterns of book ownership in England, Scotland, and Colonial America. The large-scale destruction of testamentary evidence in the 1922 fire in the Public Record Office in Dublin means that the survival of wills is patchy and hardly representative of the population at large. Although broad statistical generalization about changing patterns of book ownership over time may not be possible, case studies can be undertaken. There are a number of bodies of material that would help in such studies. In a few cases there are extant libraries from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These are, in the main, institutional rather than private libraries and the sources for the

<sup>9</sup> NLI, MSS 12121–8, 12131–2.

<sup>10</sup> Printed in Mary Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 227–52.

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, Máire Kennedy, 'The Domestic, and International Trade of an Eighteenth Century Dublin Bookseller: John Archer (1782–1810)', *Dublin Historical Record*, 49 (1996), 94–105; eadem, 'Spreading the Word in the Irish Midlands: Bookselling and Printing in the Late Eighteenth Century', *Long Room*, 43 (1998), 29–37.

history of such bodies survive better than that for private libraries.<sup>12</sup> The collection of Narcissus Marsh, Archbishop of Armagh, is preserved in the library that he founded. The library of the Dublin doctor Edward Worth also survives in its original setting. Some Church of Ireland diocesan libraries, such as those of Derry and Waterford, also survive and have significant untapped potential. In particular, the diocesan libraries at Armagh, Kilkenny, and Cashel survive in buildings built near their respective cathedrals. This allows an appreciation of how books were stored and used by contemporaries. Some private collections have survived because they were incorporated into other, mainly institutional, collections. Thus the libraries of Jerome Alexander, Henry Bouchier, Earl of Bath, and Claudius Gilbert survived because they were incorporated into the library of Trinity College, Dublin, but can be identified. Other collections, such as that of William King, the early eighteenth-century Archbishop of Dublin, were scattered over a number of institutions. Even where collections are no longer intact there are some library lists that provide some impression of what individuals may have had in their homes. The earliest of these, relating to the book collections of the Franciscan community at Youghal and the earls of Kildare, date from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century.<sup>13</sup> There are relatively few such catalogues for the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries although by the late seventeenth century the book lists of clergy, especially bishops, become more common. In addition the lists of libraries of Catholic clergy become more frequent and some of these, such as that of Bishop Luke Wadding of Ferns, were substantial.<sup>14</sup> A considerable number of such lists exist for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Of these, sixty-five dating from before 1800 have been listed by Máire Kennedy and her work provides an important base for the development of the study of book catalogues.<sup>15</sup> Such lists, however, were generally confined to those with sizeable collections of books. Those with only a few volumes had little need to list them. Other lists were made for reasons other than personal ones. Inventories of property for probate or other legal purposes may well contain a note of numbers of books, and in some cases, even give titles of books.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> For example Jane Maxwell, 'A Guide to the Manuscript Sources in TCD for the History of the Library', in Vincent Kinane and Anne Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library, Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 91–103.

<sup>13</sup> Gearóid Mac Niocaill (ed.), *Crown Surveys of Lands, 1540–1* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992), 312–14, 355–7; Catherine Moore, 'The Library Catalogues of the Eighth and Ninth Earls of Kildare', unpublished M.Phil. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1998; Colmán O Clabaigh, *The Franciscans in Ireland, 1400–1534* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002), 160–80.

<sup>14</sup> P. J. Corish, 'Bishop Wadding's Notebook', *Archivum Hibernicum*, 29 (1970), 49–114.

<sup>15</sup> Máire Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001), 191–219.

<sup>16</sup> For examples, Brian Ó Dálaigh of Bunratty Castle and the Will of Henry, 'Fifth Earl of Thomond', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, 36 (1995), 157; Hector MacDonnell, 'A Seventeenth-Century Inventory from Dunluce Castle, Co. Antrim', *JRSAL*, 123 (1992), 118, 119; BL, Add. Charter 13340, m.4d; Dublin City Archives, MS C1/J/2/4, p. 228; BL, Add. MS 11685, f. 125v.

A second way of discovering what books people selected to buy is the analysis of subscription lists. Increasingly, from the late seventeenth century, London and Dublin publishers tried to spread the cost of the production of expensive books by offering them for sale by subscription at a discount on the later retail price. The names of subscribers were often published in the volumes concerned. As yet there is no definitive list of books with subscription lists but a good starting point is F. J. G. Robinson and P. J. Wallis, *Book Subscription Lists: A Revised Guide* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Harold Hill and Son, 1975) and R. C. Alston, F. J. G. Robinson, and C. Wadham, *A Check List of Eighteenth-Century Books Containing Lists of Subscribers* (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1983). A third category of material that provides an insight into the sort of books to which individuals had access are borrowing lists. Inevitably institutions such as Marsh's Library, Dublin, the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, and the Public Library in Armagh are best served here with eighteenth-century lists. There are, however, a few less obvious lists, such as that for the library of Christ Church Cathedral in 1607, which could repay detailed study.<sup>17</sup> A few private individuals, such as James Ussher in early-seventeenth-century Dublin, lent their books and kept borrowing lists, which reveal the networks of print operating in the city.<sup>18</sup> However, even without formal borrowing lists reconstruction of the users of a library from other fragments may be possible.<sup>19</sup>

Library catalogues, subscription lists, and borrowing lists certainly provide an overview of what books people owned. Noticeably absent from the library catalogues of the learned are the small cheap books, such as almanacs or popular romances, or individual flimsy pamphlets. Most of these have not survived, being read until they wore out and were thrown away. To see something of how more ephemeral printed works such as these, along with some more substantial books, moved in society we need to look at the records of the major institutions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland. Government produced large quantities of print through, for instance, proclamations and printed receipts for taxation. Church of Ireland parishes, and cathedrals, bought books in the early eighteenth century to set up cathedral, diocesan, and parochial libraries, many of which were filled with cheap improving books for lending. Purchases like these are often reflected in parochial records such as churchwardens' accounts. Other religious

<sup>17</sup> Raymond Gillespie, 'Borrowing Books from Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, 1607', *Long Room*, 43 (1998), 15–19.

<sup>18</sup> Elizabethanne Boran, 'The Libraries of Luke Challoner and James Ussher, 1595–1608', in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *European Universities in the Age of Reformation and Counter Reformation* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 109–15.

<sup>19</sup> For an example of this see Toby Barnard, 'Marsh's Library and the Reading Public', in Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons (eds.), *The Making of Marsh's Library: Learning, Politics and Religion in Ireland, 1650–1750* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 146–62.

groupings, especially the Quakers, also utilized print as an important way of communicating information and values. Again in the central Quaker records there are a large number of references to the purchase and printing of books and, at local level, to the purchase and distribution of books.<sup>20</sup> The analysis of such institutional material has barely begun but there is a significant body of material to be recovered here in relation to the distribution and reception of print.

At the more elite end of the world of print learned and scholarly volumes merit other kinds of evaluation and contextualization using different sources. Learned books were often as important for display as for consultation. In this case the history of bookbinding is of some importance, although here, as with printers, the evidence is mainly from the books themselves. A dramatic collection of the more exotic Irish bindings is illustrated in Joseph McDonnell, *Five Hundred Years of the Art of the Book in Ireland* (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 1997), and work on the bindings of individual collections has thrown up some understanding of the priorities of owners.<sup>21</sup> The more mundane, everyday bindings have received much less attention with a view to identifying individual binders and their work.<sup>22</sup> Inevitably it is the institutions, such as Trinity College, Dublin, that preserve the little we have in the way of manuscript materials on binders at work.<sup>23</sup> The conditions under which such bound books were displayed is an area that has received scant attention. Although surviving institutional library buildings provide good evidence for how a library was to work, the emergence of the private house library in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland, together with its attendant furnishings, requires further study.<sup>24</sup> Using collections of estate papers and descriptions of reading it should be possible to recreate a more nuanced picture of the uses of books in the eighteenth century.

Not all books were for display. Many were often read in quite different ways. The history of reading is a complex area and requires the employment of a wide range of sources, many of which are detailed in the chapters on reading in this volume. Individuals recorded their reactions to the printed word in many ways, although what historians now see is what was written

<sup>20</sup> For an overview of the Quaker material see Olive Goodbody, *Guide to Irish Quaker Records, 1654–1860* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1967).

<sup>21</sup> Vincent Kinane, 'Some Red Morocco Bindings by Christopher Chapman in the Worth Library, Dublin', *Long Room*, 42 (1997), 20–5. Muriel McCarthy, 'An Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bibliophile', *Irish Arts Review*, 3 (4) (Winter 1986), 31–2.

<sup>22</sup> However, see Anthony Cains, 'The Long Room Survey of Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Books of the First Collections', in Kinane and Walsh (eds.), *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library, Dublin*, 53–72.

<sup>23</sup> For example William O'Sullivan, 'The Eighteenth-Century Rebinding of the Manuscripts', *Long Room*, 1 (1970), 19–28.

<sup>24</sup> For institutions see Edward McParland, *Public Architecture in Ireland, 1680–1760* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 162–7.

down. Public readings of printed books and newspapers could have the effect of changing the way in which a group understood a work as compared with an individual's experience when reading alone in his or her home. Occasionally traces of such public reading have survived in illustrations and contemporary descriptions but these are, at best, fleeting. Solitary reading may have touched the lives of fewer people but it is this that has left traces. Some indignant or ecstatic readers scribbled in the margins of books their reactions to what they were reading. This material is enigmatic and often difficult to find. Only one finding aid to such annotations exists and there is no catalogue of books from an Irish provenance with annotations that would provide a starting point for such an investigation.<sup>25</sup> Many readers confided in their diaries their opinions about what they read, or they discussed the ideas they encountered in their reading in letters to family and friends. Such material is widely scattered in collections of family papers and again, finding aids are few. Some collections of correspondence are particularly revealing about reading patterns and in particular the mid-eighteenth-century letters from Bishop Synge to his daughter, Alicia, have a great deal to say about the impact of print on that family.<sup>26</sup>

The sources for the history of the Irish book in this period are varied and widely scattered, ranging from the specialist world of the books themselves to passing references in general correspondence. Likewise, the secondary literature on this history is also scattered. There is no convenient bibliography of the subject other than the references found in general bibliographies of Irish history and literature and in recent monographs. The compilation of a database of secondary works would be an important step forward in advancing the relatively new area of the history of the Irish book. Book history is a relatively new discipline and much remains to be discovered about the range and nature of the sources that can be pressed into service. Careful searching of the sort of extraneous documentation little used by historical bibliographers, as well as the traditional role of bibliographic description, is needed together with the imaginative interpretation of that material before the lineaments of the world of print in early modern Ireland can be revealed more fully.

<sup>25</sup> R. C. Alston, *Books with Manuscript: A Short Title Catalogue of Books with Manuscript Notes in the British Library* (London: British Library, 1993).

<sup>26</sup> Mary Louise Legg (ed.), *The Synge Letters: Bishop Synge to His Daughter Alicia, Roscommon to Dublin, 1746–1752* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1996).

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